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EVERY MAN'S BOOK OF SACRED VERSE

TO

F. A. B.

I give you the end of a golden string,
Only wind it into a ball,
It will lead you in at Heaven's gate
Built in Jerusalem's wall.

William Blake.

EVERY MAN'S BOOK
OF
SACRED VERSE

EDITED WITH NOTES
BY
GORDON CROSSE

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PREFACE

THE object of this book is to put before the reader a representative selection of the best English sacred poetry from the Middle Ages to the present time. With this end in view I have not confined myself to well-known writers, though I hope that in this respect the volume will not be found wanting. But I have also tried to enlarge the scope of the book, and to introduce an element of freshness by admitting a number of less widely-known poets, with whose work many readers will, I hope, be glad to make, or improve, acquaintance. No anthologist can expect to escape criticism in respect both of what he has included and of what he has left out; but I would ask that in criticizing my selection readers will bear in mind that I have deliberately flung my net widely, and have sometimes limited my examples of the best-known writers in order to include some of those that are perhaps less familiar than they deserve to be.

Two classes of omission require a word of explanation. In view of the limits of my space I have not thought it necessary to include hymns which are familiar to every one, even when they reach a high level of poetry, as, for instance, 'Lead, kindly Light' and 'Rock of Ages.'

For reasons of space I have also been chary of admitting long poems. It did not seem permissible in compiling a book of sacred verse either to omit or to abbreviate Milton's Nativity Ode, and I have therefore given it entire. But, after some doubt and with much reluctance, I have left out Browning's 'Saul' and Crashaw's 'S. Teresa,' as I could not find it in my heart to mutilate them. On the other

hand, I thought that Spenser's 'Hymn of Heavenly Love' and Smart's 'Song to David' might fairly be represented by extracts. Other applications of my guiding principle—always to give the best and most representative selection I could subject to limitations of space—to the inclusion, omission, or abbreviation of particular poems are explained in the Notes at the end of the volume.

These Notes also contain such brief biographical and critical remarks as seemed likely to add to the reader's comprehension and enjoyment. These are for the most part confined to the less familiar poets, for it did not seem necessary to take up space by telling him facts about, for example, Spenser and Milton, which he knows already or can easily find elsewhere. As regards criticism, I have as a rule left him to formulate his own conclusions without assistance from me, though I hope it will not be thought impertinent that I have sometimes quoted a sentence or two from critics of acknowledged eminence.

After some hesitation I have decided to modernize the spelling of the older poems except where rhyme or metre forbade. In books intended primarily for scholars it is clearly desirable to reproduce the original text as closely as possible. But when the object is to enable the general reader to appreciate the writings of an earlier age the case is altered. Very often the old spellings represent the taste and fancy, not of the poet, but of a careless or ignorant transcriber or compositor, and therefore are not worth preserving. And, what is more important, these spellings now produce an impression of archaism which was far from the writer's intention. When a mediaeval scribe tells us that the penalty of Adam was for 'an appil thát he tok' we are apt to smile at his 'quaintness.' But he intended no such effect. He was spelling the words as he thought they should be spelt, and we shall best reproduce his intention and the spirit of his verse by reading plainly 'an

apple that he took.' In the Notes these considerations have less force, and in the quotations contained in them I have therefore retained the original spelling.

I must not omit to express the debt which, in common with all lovers of poetry, I owe to earlier anthologies, to Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's *Oxford Book of English Verse*, Mr. Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* and *Treasury of Sacred Song*, Dean Beeching's *Lyra Sacra* and *Paradise of English Poetry*, and Archbishop Trench's *Household Book of English Poetry*, as well as to those who have made selections from the poems of particular periods, Mr. Bullen for the Elizabethans, Mr. Saintsbury and Mr. Massingham for the Carolines, and the editors of the standard anthologies of recent and contemporary verse. Yet the fact that fully a third of the poems in this book do not appear in any of these collections suggests that there are still nearly as good fish in the wide sea of English poetry as have hitherto fallen to the net of the anthologist.

My thanks are due to those who have allowed me to reprint copyright poems: a detailed list is given below. Finally, I have much pleasure in recording my gratitude to my friends the Rev. G. K. A. Bell and Dr. E. Hermitage Day, to whose kind and readily-given help the book owes much of whatever value it may possess.

G. C.

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EVERY MAN'S BOOK OF SACRED VERSE

1

THE ROSE*

THERE is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bare Jesu.
Alleluia.

For in this rose contained was
Heaven and earth in little space,
Res miranda.

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three,
Pares forma.

The angels sungen the shepherds to,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gaudeamus.

Leave we all this worldly mirth,
And follow we this joyful birth,
Transeamus.

Anon.

2

THE PENALTY OF ADAM

ADAM lay ibounden,
Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long;

And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took,
As clerks finden
Written in their book.

* An asterisk indicates a reference to the notes at the end of the book.

Ne had the apple taken been
The apple taken been,
Ne had never our Lady
A been Heaven queen.

Blessed be the time
That apple taken was.
Therefore we mun singen
Deo gracias.

Anon.

3 OUR LADY AT THE CROSS

'MARY, Mother, come and see,
Thy Son is nailèd on a tree,
Hand and foot, He may not go,
His body is wounded all in woe.

'Thy sweet Son that thou hast borne,
To save mankind that was forlorn,
His head is wreathen in a thorn,
His blissful body is all to-torn.'

When he this tale began to tell
Mary would no longer dwell,
But hied her fast to that hill
Where Jesus His blood began to spill.

'My sweet Son, that art me dear,
Why have men hanged Thee here?
Thy head is wreathen in a briar;
My lovely Son, where is Thy cheer?'

'Woman, to John I thee betake.
John, keep this woman for My sake.
For sinful souls My death I take,
On rood I hang for many's sake.

'This game alone I must play;
For sinful souls I die to-day;
There is no wight goes by the way
Of My pains can well say.'

Anon.

4 I SING OF A MAIDEN

I SING of a maiden
That is makeles;[1]
King of all kings
To her son she ches.[2]

He came all so still
There His mother was,
Like dew in April
That falleth on the grass.

He came all so still
To His mother's bower,
Like dew in April
That falleth on the flower.

He came all so still,
There His mother lay,
Like dew in April
That falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden
Was never none but she;
Well might such a lady
Goddes mother be.

Anon.

5 THE POOR PARSON *

A GOOD man was there of religioun,
And was a Poore Parson of a Toun;
But rich he was of holy thought and work;
He was also a learned man, a clerk,
That Christes gospel truely would preach:
His parisshens devoutly would he teach.
Benign he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversity full patient;
And such he was y-provèd ofte sithes.[3]
Full loth were him to cursen for his tithes,

[1] matchless. [2] chose. [3] times.

But rather would he yeven,[1] out of doubt,
Unto his poore parisshens about,
Of his offring and eke of his substance;
He could in little thing have suffisance.
Wide was his parish, and houses far asunder,
But he ne lefte not for rain ne thunder,
In sickness nor in mischief to visit
The ferrest in his parish, much and lite,[2]
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staff.
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf[3]
That first he wrought and afterward he taught.
Out of the gospel he these wordes caught,
And this figure he added eke thereto,
That if gold ruste what shall iron do?
For if a priest be foul, on whom we trust,
No wonder is a lewed[4] man to rust;
And shame it is, if a priest take keep,[5]
A shiten[6] shepherd and a clene sheep.
Well ought a priest ensample for to give
By his cleanness how that his sheep should live.
He sette not his benefice to hire,
And left his sheep encumbered in the mire,
And ran to London, unto Seint Poules,
To seeken him a chaunterie for souls;
Or with a brotherhood to be withhold,
But dwelt at home and kepte well his fold,
So that the wolf ne made it not miscarry,
He was a shepherd and not a mercenary:
And though he holy were and virtuous,
He was to sinful man not despitous,[7]
Ne of his speeche dangerous ne digne,[8]
But in his teaching discreet and benigne.
To drawen folk to Heaven by fairness,
By good ensample, this was his business:
But it were any person obstinate,
Whatso he were, of high or low estate,

[1] give. [2] great and small. [3] gave.
[4] unlearned. [5] heed. [6] befouled.
[7] scornful. [8] haughty

Him would he snybben[1] sharply for the nonys.
A better priest I trow that nowhere none is;
He waited after no pomp and reverence,
Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
But Christes lore, and His Apostles' twelve,
He taught, but first he followed it himselve.

Geoffrey Chaucer.

6 THE FALCON *

Lully, lullay, lully, lullay,
The faucon hath borne my mate away.

HE bare him up, he bare him down,
He bare him into an orchard brown.

In that orchard there was an hall
That was hanged with purple and pall.

And in that hall there was a bed,
It was hanged with gold so red.

And in that bed there lieth a knight,
His wounds bleeding day and night.

By that bedside kneeleth a may,[2]
And she weepeth both night and day.

And by that bedside there standeth a stone,
Corpus Christi written thereon.

Anon.

7 LIKE A LAMB OFFERED IN SACRIFICE *

BEHOLD My love, and give Me thine again,
Behold I died thy ransom for to pay;
See how My heart is open broad and plain,
Thy ghostly enemies only to affray;
An harder battle no man might essay,
Of all triumphs the greatest high emprise;
Wherefore, O man, no longer thee dismay,
I gave My blood for thee in sacrifice.

[1] reprove (snub). [2] maid

Turn home again: thy sin do thou forsake,
Behold and see if aught be left behind,
How I to mercy am ready thee to take,
Give Me thy heart, and be no more unkind;
My love and thine, together do them bind,
And let them never parte in no wise.
When thou wert lost, thy soul again to find
My blood I offered for thee in sacrifice.

Tarry no longer; toward thine heritage
Haste on thy way, and be of right good cheer.
Go each day onward on thy pilgrimage,
Think how short time thou shalt abide here.
Thy place is bigg'd [1] above the starres clear,
None earthly palace wrought in so stately wise.
Come on My friend, My brother most entire,
For thee I offered My blood in sacrifice.

John Lydgate.

8 UNTO US A SON IS BORN *

Rorate coeli desuper!
Heavens distil your balmy showers,
For now is risen the bright Daystar,
From the rose Mary, flower of flowers:
The clear Sun, whom no cloud devours,
Surmounting Phoebus in the east,
Is comen of [2] His heavenly towers
Et nobis Puer natus est.

Sinners be glad, and penance do,
And thank your Maker heartfully;
For He that ye might not come to,
To you is comen full humbly,
Your soules with His blood to buy,
And loose you of the fiend's arrest,
And only of His own mercy;
Pro nobis Puer natus est.

[1] built. [2] from.

Celestial fowles in the air
Sing with your notes upon height;
In firthes and in forests fair
Be mirthful now at all your might,
For passed is your dully night,
Aurora hath the cloudes pierced,
The sun is risen with gladsome light,
Et nobis Puer natus est.

Sing heaven imperial, most of height,
Regions of air make harmony,
All fish in flood and food of flight
Be mirthful and make melody:
All *Gloria in excelsis* cry,
Heaven, earth, sea, man, bird, and beast;
He that is crowned above the sky
Pro nobis Puer natus est.

William Dunbar.

9 EPITAPH *

O MORTAL folk, you may behold and see
How I lie here, sometime a mighty knight;
The end of joy and all prosperity
Is death at last, thorough his course and might;
After the day there cometh the dark night;
For though the day be never so long
At last the bells ringeth to evensong.

Stephen Hawes.

10 THE CREATION *

WHEN God had made the heavens bright,
The sun and moon for to give light,
The starry heaven and chrystalline,
And, by His sapience divine,
The planets in their circle round
Whirling about with merry sound—

He clad the earth with herbs and trees;
All kinds of fishes in the seas,
All kinds of beast He did prepare,
With fowles flying in the air.
So by His wisdom infinite
All was made pleasant and perfite.

When heaven and earth and their contents
Were ended, with their ornaments,
Then last of all the Lord began
Of most vile earth to make the man.
Not of the lily, nor the rose,
Nor cypress tree, as I suppose,
Neither of gold nor precious stones;
Of earth He made flesh, blood, and bones.
To that intent God made him thus,
That he should not be glorious,[1]
Nor in himself no thing should see
But matter of humility.

Sir David Lindsay.

11

A PRAYER *

O JESU, if Thou do withdraw
Thy comfort for a time,
Let not despair take hold on me,
For any sinful crime;

But give me patience to abide
Thy pleasure and Thy will;
For sure Thy judgements all are right,
Though I be wicked still.

But yet a promise hast Thou made
To all that trust in Thee;
According to which promise, Lord,
Have mercy now on me.

William Hunnis.

[1] boastful.

12 GASCOIGNE'S GOOD-MORROW *

YOU that have spent the silent night
In sleep and quiet rest,
And joy to see the cheerful light
That riseth in the East
Now clear your voice, now cheer your heart,
Come help me now to sing;
Each willing wight come bear a part,
To praise the Heavenly King.

Yet as this deadly night did last
But for a little space,
And heavenly day, now night is past,
Doth show his pleasant face;
So must we hope to see God's face
At last in Heaven on high,
When we have changed this mortal place
For immortality.

The little birds which sing so sweet
Are like the angels' voice,
Which render God His praises meet,
And teach us to rejoice.
And as they more esteem that mirth
Than dread the night's annoy
So must we deem our days on earth
But hell to heavenly joy.

Unto which joys for to attain
God grant us all His grace,
And send us after worldly pain
In Heaven to have a place;
Where we may still enjoy that light,
Which never shall decay.
Lord, for Thy mercy lend us might
To see that joyful day.

George Gascoigne.

13 A HYMN

WHEN the angels all are singing,
All of glory ever springing,
In the ground of high Heaven's graces,
Where all virtues have their places:
O that my poor soul were near them,
With an humble heart to hear them!

Then should Faith in Love's submission,
Joying but in Mercy's blessing,
Where that sins are in remission,
Sing the joyful soul's confessing,
Of her comforts high commending,
All in glory, never ending.

But, ah wretched sinful creature!
How should the corrupted nature
Of this wicked heart of mine,
Think upon that Love divine,
That doth tune the angels' voices,
While the host of Heaven rejoices?

No, the song of deadly sorrow,
In the night that hath no morrow,
And their pains are never ended,
That have Heavenly powers offended,
Is more fitting to the merit
Of my foul infected spirit.

Yet while Mercy is removing
All the sorrows of the loving,
How can Faith be full of blindness,
To despair of Mercy's kindness;
While the hand of Heaven is giving
Comfort from the ever-living?

No, my soul, be no more sorry;
Look unto that life of glory,
Which the grace of Faith regardeth,
And the tears of Love rewardeth:
Where the soul the comfort getteth,
That the angels' music setteth.

There when thou art well conducted,
And by Heavenly grace instructed,
How the faithful thoughts to fashion
Of a ravished lover's passion,
Sing with saints to angels nighest,
Halleluiah in the highest!

Nicholas Breton.

14 HIS PILGRIMAGE *

GIVE me my scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage,
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.

Blood must be my body's balmer,
No other balm will there be given;
Whilst my soul like quiet palmer,
Travelleth towards the land of Heaven;
Over the silver mountains,
Where spring the nectar fountains;
There will I kiss
The bowl of bliss,
And drink mine everlasting fill
Upon every milken[1] hill.
My soul will be a-dry before,
But after, it will thirst no more.

From thence to Heaven's bribeless hall,
Where no corrupted voices brawl,
No conscience molten into gold,
No forged accuser bought or sold,
No cause deferred, no vain-spent journey,
For there Christ is the King's Attorney,
Who pleads for all without degrees,
And He hath angels, but no fees:
And when the grand twelve-million jury
Of our sins, with direful fury,
Against our souls black verdicts give,
Christ pleads His death, and then we live.

Sir Walter Raleigh.

[1] abounding in milk.

15 VERSES *

FOUND IN HIS BIBLE IN THE GATE-HOUSE AT WESTMINSTER

EVEN such is time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days;
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

Sir Walter Raleigh.

16 EASTER MORNING

MOST glorious Lord of life, that on this day
Didst make Thy triumph over death and sin,
And, having harrowed hell*, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win;
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin,
And grant that we, for whom Thou diddest die,
Being with Thy dear blood clean washed from sin,
May live for ever in felicity;
And that Thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love Thee for the same again;
And for Thy sake that all like dear didst buy,
With love may one another entertain.
So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought;
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

Edmund Spenser.

17 AN HYMN OF HEAVENLY LOVE *

OUT of the bosom of eternal bliss,
In which He reignèd with His glorious Sire,
He down descended like a most demiss[1]
And abject thrall, in flesh's frail attire,
That He for him might pay sin's deadly hire,
And him restore unto that happy state
In which he stood before his hapless fate.

[1] base.

In flesh at first the guilt committed was,
Therefore in flesh it must be satisfied,
Nor spirit nor angel, though they man surpass,
Could make amends to God for man's misguide,
But only man himself, who self did slide:
So, taking flesh of sacred Virgin's womb,
For man's dear sake He did a Man become.

And that most blessed Body which was born
Without all blemish or reproachful blame,
He freely gave to be both rent and torn
Of cruel hands, who with despiteful shame
Reviling Him, that them most vile became,
At length Him nailèd on a gallow-tree,
And slew the Just by most unjust decree.

O blessed Well of Love! O Flower of Grace!
O glorious Morning Star! O Lamp of Light!
Most lively image of Thy Father's face,
Eternal King of Glory, Lord of might,
Meek Lamb of God, before all worlds behight,[1]
How can we Thee requite for all this good?
Or what can prize[2] that Thy most precious blood?

Yet nought Thou ask'st in lieu of all this love,
But love of us, for guerdon of Thy pain:
Ay me! what can us less than that behove?
Had He required life for us again,
Had it been wrong to ask His own with gain?
He gave us life; He it restorèd lost;
Then life were least that us so little cost.

But He our life hath left unto us free,
Free that was thrall, and blessed that was banned;
Ne ought demands, but that we loving be,
As He Himself hath loved us aforehand,
And bound thereto with an eternal band,
Him first to love that us so dearly bought,
And next our brethren, to His image wrought.

[1] named. [2] equal in value.

Him first to love great right and reason is,
Who first to us our life and being gave,
And after, when we farèd had amiss,
Us wretches from the second death did save;
And last the Food of Life, which now we have,
Even He Himself, in His dear Sacrament,
To feed our hungry souls, unto us lent.

Then next to love our brethren that were made
Of that self mould, and that self Maker's Hand,
That we, and to the same again shall fade,
Where they shall have like heritage of land,[1]
However here on higher steps we stand;
Which also were with self-same price redeemed
That we, however of us light esteemed.

And were they not, yet since that loving Lord
Commanded us to love them for His sake,
Even for His sake, and for His sacred word,
Which in His last bequest He to us spake,
We should them love, and with their needs partake;
Knowing that whatso'er to them we give,
We give to Him by whom we all do live.

Such mercy He by His most holy rede
Unto us taught, and to approve it true,
Ensampled it by His most righteous deed,
Shewing us mercy (miserable crew!)
That we the like should to the wretches shew,
And love our brethren, thereby to approve
How much Himself that lovèd us we love.

Edmund Spenser.

18 MUTABILITY *

WHEN I bethink me on that speech whilere[2]
Of Mutability, and well it weigh,
Me seems that though she all unworthy were
Of the Heaven's Rule; yet, very sooth to say,
In all things else she bears the greatest sway;

[1] i.e. the grave. [2] erewhile.

Which makes me loathe this state of life so tickle,
And love of things so vain to cast away;
Whose flowring pride, so fading and so fickle,
Short Time shall soon cut down with his consuming sickle.

Then 'gin I think on that which Nature said,
Of that same time when no more Change shall be,
But stedfast rest of all things, firmly stay'd
Upon the pillars of Eternity,
That is contrair to Mutability;
For all that moveth doth in Change delight:
But thenceforth all shall rest eternally
With Him that is the God of Sabbaoth hight:
O that great Sabbaoth God, grant me that Sabbaoth's sight!

Edmund Spenser.

19 FAREWELL TO LOVE *

LEAVE me, O Love, which reachest but to dust;
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things;
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust;
Whatever fades, but fading pleasure brings.
Draw in thy beams, and humble all thy might
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedoms be;
Which breaks the clouds, and opens forth the light,
That doth both shine, and give us sight to see.
O take fast hold; let that light be thy guide
In this small course which birth draws out to death,
And think how evil becometh him to slide,
Who seeketh Heaven, and comes of heavenly breath.
Then farewell, world; thy uttermost I see:
Eternal Love, maintain Thy life in me.

Sir Philip Sidney.

20 PSALM XLVIII *

HE that hath eternal being
Glorious is and glorious shows
In the city He hath chose,
Where stands His holy hill.

Hill Sion, hill of fairest seeing,
City of the King most great,
Seated in a northly seat,
All climes with joy doth fill.
In each palace she containeth
God a well-known rock remaineth.

One day kings a day appointed,
There with joinèd force to be;
See they it? The things they see
Amaze their mated[1] minds.
Flying, trembling, disappointed,
So they fear, and so they fare,
As the wife whose woful care
The pangs of child-bed finds.
Right as ships from Tarshish going,
Crushed with blasts of Eurus blowing.

Now our sight hath matched our hearing,
In what state God's city stands,
How, supported by His hands,
God ever holds the same.
In Thy Temple's midst appearing,
We Thy favour, Lord, attend:
Righteous Lord, both free from end
Thy fame doth match Thy name.
Thy just hand brings Sion gladness,
Turns to mirth all Juda's sadness.

Compass Sion in her standing,
Tell her towers, mark her forts,
Note with care the stately ports
Her royal houses bear.
For that age's understanding
Which shall come when we shall go,
Glad in former times to know,
How many, what they were.
For God is our God for ever,
Us till death forsaking never.

Sir Philip Sidney (?)

[1] troubled.

21 OF GOD'S OMNIPOTENCY *

O EVERY living worldly wight,
Awake and 'dress[1] yourself with speed.
To serve and praise the God of might
From whom all bounty doth proceed;
For if ye drift and still refuse,
The Heavens and Earth will you accuse.

The brutal beasts, but[2] any strife,
They willingly His voice obey;
The creätures that has no life
Sets forth His glory day by day;
The earth, the air, the sea and fire
Are subject all to His empire.

The Heaven it is His dwelling-place,
The Earth His little footstool low,
His works are all before His face,
Of hearts the secrets He does know,
And everything as in a glass
He sees before it come to pass.

The swift and active fiery sprites,
The cherubims of substance pure,
They walk among the holy streets
And makes Him daily service sure;
Yea, at all times they ready stand
To gang and come at His command.

His holy statute to fulfil,
And potent power to declare,
The massive earth reposes still,
Suspended in the cessil[3] air;
And at her due appointed hours
Brings forth most pleasant fruits and flowers.

[1] address. [2] without. [3] yielding.

The mighty winds blaws to and fro,
From every airth[1] by day and night,
We hear them thudding by us go,
Yet not conceives them with our sight;
But in a clap, the Lord to please,
Their blasts they quietly appease.

Like flocks of fowls the clouds above
Forth flies and covers all the sky;
Again they suddenly remove,
We wot not where, nor reason why:
But to obey His holy law
They pour out rain, sharp hail, and snaw.

He made the sun a lamp of light,
A well of heat to shine by day,
He made the moon to guide the night,
And set the stars in good array,
Orion, Pleiads, and the Urse
Observes their due appointed course.

He is above Mercurius,
Above Neptunus on the sea;
The winds they know not Eolus;
There is no Jupiter but He;
And all your gods, both great and small,
Are of no force, for He is all.

Alexander Hume.

22

A DIALOGUE *

BETWIXT GOD AND THE SOUL

Soul. WHILST my soul's eye beheld no light
But what streamed from Thy gracious sight,
To me the world's greatest king
Seemed but some little vulgar thing.

God. Whilst thou prov'dst pure, and that in thee
I could glass[2] all My Deity,
How glad did I from Heaven depart
To find a lodging in thy heart.

[1] quarter. [2] reflect.

Soul. Now fame and greatness bear the sway;
'Tis they that hold my prison's key;
For whom my soul would die, might she
Leave them her immortality.

God. I and some few pure souls conspire,
And burn both in a mutual fire,
For whom I'd die once more, ere they
Should miss of Heaven's eternal day.

Soul. But, Lord, what if I turn again,
And with an adamantine chain
Lock me to Thee? What if I chase
The world away to give Thee place?

God. Then though these souls in whom I joy
Are seraphims, thou but a toy,
A foolish toy, yet once more I
Would with thee live, and for thee die.

Anon.

23 A HYMN

RISE, O my soul, with thy desires to Heaven,
And with divinest contemplation use
Thy time where time's eternity is given,
And let vain thoughts no more thy thoughts abuse;
But down in darkness* let them lie:
So live thy better, let thy worse thoughts die.

And thou, my soul, inspired with holy flame,
View and review with most regardful eye
That holy cross, whence thy salvation came,
On which thy Saviour and thy sin did die;
For in that sacred object is much pleasure,
And in that Saviour is my life, my treasure.

To Thee, O Jesu, I direct mine eye,
To Thee my hands, to Thee my humble knees;
To Thee my heart shall offer sacrifice,
To Thee my thoughts, who my thoughts only sees.
To Thee my self, my self and all I give;
To Thee I die, to Thee I only live.

Anon.

24

IF I could shut the gate against my thoughts
And keep out sorrow from this room within,
Or memory could cancel all the notes
Of my misdeeds, and I unthink my sin:
How free, how clear, how clean my soul should lie,
Discharged of such a loathsome company!

Or were there other rooms within my heart
That did not to my conscience join so near,
Where I might lodge the thoughts of sin apart
That I might not their clamorous crying hear;
What peace, what joy, what ease should I possess,
Freed from their horrors that my soul oppress!

But, O my Saviour, Who my refuge art,
Let Thy dear mercies stand 'twixt them and me,
And be the wall to separate my heart
So that I may at length repose me free;
That peace, and joy, and rest may be within,
And I remain divided from my sin.

Anon.

25 THE BURNING BABE*

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat, which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,
A pretty Babe all burning bright, did in the air appear;
Who scorchèd with excessive heat, such floods of tears did shed,
As though his floods should quench his flames, which with his tears were fed.
'Alas!' quoth he, 'but newly born, in fiery heats I fry,
Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel my fire, but I;

My faultless breast the furnace is, the fuel, wounding thorns;
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke, the ashes, shames and scorns;
The fuel Justice layeth on, and Mercy blows the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought are men's defilèd souls:
For which, as now on fire I am, to work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath, to wash them in my blood.'
With this he vanished out of sight, and swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I callèd unto mind that it was Christmas Day.

Robert Southwell.

26 LIFE IS BUT LOSS *

By force I live, in will I wish to die,
In plaint I pass the length of lingering days;
Free would my soul from mortal body fly,
And tread the track of death's desirèd ways:
Life is but loss where death is deemèd gain,
And loathèd pleasures breed displeasing pain.

Who would not die to kill all murdering greives[1]?
Or who would live in never-dying fears?
Who would not wish his treasure safe from thieves
And quit his heart from pangs, his eyes from tears?
Death parteth but two ever-fighting foes,
Whose civil strife doth work our endless woes.

Life is a wandering course to doubtful rest;
As oft a cursèd rise to damning leap,
As happy race to win a heavenly crest;
None being sure what final fruits to reap:
And who can like in such a life to dwell,
Whose ways are strait to Heaven but wide to Hell?

[1] griefs.

Come, cruel Death, why lingerest thou so long?
What doth withhold thy dint[1] from fatal stroke?
Now prest I am, alas! thou dost me wrong
To let me live more anger to provoke:
Thy right is had when thou has stopped my breath,
Why shouldst thou stay to work my double death?

If Saul's attempt in falling on his blade
As lawful were as eth[2] to put in ure,[3]
If Sampson's leave a common law were made,
Of Abel's lot, if all that would were sure,
Then, cruel Death, thou should'st the tyrant play
With none but such as wishèd for delay.

Where life is loved thou ready are to kill,
And to abridge with sudden pangs their joy;
Where life is loathed thou wilt not work their will,
But dost adjourn their death to their annoy.
To some thou art a fierce unbidden guest,
But those that crave thy help thou helpest least.

Avaunt, O viper! I thy spite defy:
There is a God that over-rules thy force,
Who can thy weapons to His will apply,
And shorten or prolong our brittle course.
I on His mercy not thy might rely,
To Him I live, for Him I hope to die.

Robert Southwell.

27 OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

BEHOLD, the Father is His daughter's Son,
The bird that built the nest is hatched therein,
The Old of Years an hour hath not outrun,
Eternal Life to live doth now begin,
The Word is dumb, the Mirth of Heaven doth weep,
Might feeble is, and Force doth faintly creep.

[1] attack. [2] easy. [3] use.

Gift better than Himself God doth not know,
  Gift better than his God no man can see;
This gift doth here the giver given bestow,
  Gift to this gift let each receiver be:
God is my gift, Himself He freely gave me,
God's gift am I, and none but God shall have me.

Man altered was by sin from man to beast,
  Beasts' food is hay, hay is all mortal flesh;
Now God is flesh, and lies in manger pressed,
  As hay the brutest sinner to refresh:
O happy field wherein this fodder grew,
Whose taste doth us from beasts to men renew.

Robert Southwell.

28 REPENTANCE*

VIEW me, Lord, a work of Thine.
  Shall I then be drowned in night?
Might Thy grace in me but shine,
  I should seem made all of light.

But my soul still surfeits so
  On the poisoned baits of sin,
That I strange and ugly grow;
  All is dark and foul within.

Cleanse me, Lord, that I may kneel
  At Thine altar, pure and white:
They that once Thy mercies feel
  Gaze no more on earth's delight.

Worldly joys like shadows fade,
  When the heavenly light appears;
But the covenants Thou hast made
  Endless, know not days nor years.

In Thy Word, Lord, is my trust.
  To Thy mercies fast I fly.
Though I am but clay and dust,
  Yet Thy grace can lift me high.

Thomas Campion.

29 SEEK THE LORD

SEEK the Lord and in His ways persèver,
O faint not, but, as eagles, fly!
For His steep hill is high:
Then striving gain the top, and triumph ever!

When with glory there thy brows are crownèd,
New joys shall so abound in thee,
Such sights thy soul shall see,
That worldly thoughts shall by their beams be drownèd.

Farewell World, thou mass of mere confusion!
False light, with many shadows dimmed!
Old witch, with new foils trimmed!
Thou deadly sleep of soul, and charmed illusion!

I the King will seek of kings adorèd;
Spring of light; Tree of grace and bliss,
Whose fruit so sovereign is
That all who taste it are from death restorèd.

Thomas Campion.

30 MUSIC

To music bent is my retired mind,
And fain would I some song of pleasure sing,
But in vain joys no comfort now I find;
From heavenly thoughts all true delight doth spring.
Thy power, O God, Thy mercies, to record,
Will sweeten every note and every word.

All earthly pomp and beauty to express,
Is but to carve in snow, on waves to write.
Celestial things, though men conceive them less,
Yet fullest are they, in themselves, of light.
Such beams they yield as know no means to die;
Such heat they cast as lifts the spirit high.

Thomas Campion.

31 O COME QUICKLY

NEVER weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore,
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more,
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast.
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest!

Ever blooming are the joys of Heaven's high Paradise,
Cold age deafs not there our ears, nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the sun outshines, whose beams the blessed only see.
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to Thee!

Thomas Campion.

32 THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL *

O WHAT is Man, great Maker of mankind,
That Thou to him so great respect dost bear,
That Thou adorn'st him with so bright a mind,
Mak'st him a king, and even an angel's peer?

O what a lively life, what heavenly power,
What spreading virtue, what a sparkling fire,
How great, how plentiful, how rich a dower
Dost Thou within this dying flesh inspire!

Thou leav'st Thy print in other works of Thine,
But Thy whole image Thou in Man hast writ.
There cannot be a creature more divine,
Except, like Thee, it should be infinite.

But it exceeds Man's thought to think how high
God hath raised Man, since God a man became:
The angels do admire this mystery,
And are astonished when they view the same.

Heaven waxeth old; and all the spheres above
Shall one day faint, and their swift motion stay;
And Time itself in time shall cease to move,
Only the soul survives, and lives for aye.

None that acknowledge God or Providence
Their soul's eternity did ever doubt;
For all religion takes her root from hence,
Which no poor naked nation lives without.

For since the world for Man created was,
(For only Man the use thereof doth know)
If Man do perish like a withered grass,
How doth God's wisdom order things below?

And if that wisdom still wise ends propound,
Why made He Man of other creatures king,
When, if he perish here, there is not found
In all the world so poor and vile a thing?

If Death do quench us quite we have great wrong,
Since for our service all things else were wrought,
That daws and trees and rocks should last so long,
When we must in an instant pass to nought.

But blest be that great Power that hath us blest
With longer life than heaven or earth can have;
Which hath infused into one mortal breast
Immortal powers not subject to the grave.

O ignorant poor Man! what dost thou bear
Locked up within the casket of thy breast,
What jewels and what riches hast thou there,
What heavenly treasure in so weak a chest!

Look in thy soul, and thou shalt beauties find
Like those which drowned Narcissus in the flood.
Honour and pleasure both are in thy mind,
And all that in the world is counted good.

Think of her worth, and think that God did mean
This worthy mind should worthy things embrace ;
Blot not her beauties with thy thoughts unclean,
Nor her dishonour with thy passions base.

And when thou think'st of her eternity,
Think not that death against her nature is ;
Think it a birth, and when thou goest to die,
Sing like a swan, as though thou went'st to bliss.

And thou, my soul, which turn'st thy curious eye
To view the beams of thine own form divine,
Know that thou canst know nothing perfectly,
While thou are clouded with this flesh of mine.

Cast down thyself, and only strive to raise
The glory of thy Maker's sacred Name.
Use all thy powers that blessed Power to praise
Which gives thee power to be, and use the same.

Sir John Davies.

33 SONNET*

O WHITHER shall my troubled Muse incline,
When not the glorious Scaffold of the skies,
Nor highest Heaven's resplendent hierarchies,
Where heavenly soldiers in pure armour shine,
Nor air which Thy sweet Spirit doth refine,
Nor earth, Thy precious Blood's unworthy prize,
Nor seas, which when Thou list ebb and arise,
Nor any creature profane or divine
Can blaze the flourish of Thy termless praise ;
Surreaching far by manifold large space
All divine fabric of Thy sacred Hands?
Even thither shall my Muse her music raise,
Where my soul's everlasting palace stands,
Sweet refuge of salvation, court of grace.

Barnabe Barnes.

34 TO FIND OUT GOD *

I SOUGHT Thee round about, O Thou my God,
To find Thy abode:
I said unto the Earth, 'Speak, art thou He?'
She answered me,
'I am not.' I enquired of creatures all,
In general,
Contained therein: they with one voice proclaim
That none amongst them challenged such a Name.

I asked the Seas, and all the Deeps below,
My God to know:
I asked the reptiles, and whatever is
In the abyss:
Even from the shrimp to the leviathan
My enquiry ran:
But in those desarts, which no line can sound,
The God I sought for was not to be found.

I asked the Air if that were He, but know
It told me, 'No':
I from the towering eagle to the wren
Demanded then,
If any feathered fowl 'mong them were such:
But they, all much
Offended with my question, in full quire
Answered, to find my God I must look higher.

And now, my God, by Thy illumining Grace,
Thy glorious Face
(So far forth as Thou wilt discovered be)
Methinks I see:
And though invisible and infinite,
To human sight,
Thou in Thy Mercy, Justice, Truth, appearest,
In which to our frail senses Thou com'st nearest.

O, make us apt to seek and quick to find,
Thou God most kind:
Give us Love, Hope, and Faith in Thee to trust,
Thou God most just:
Remit all our offences, we entreat,
Most Good, most Great:
Grant that our willing though unworthy quest
May, through Thy grace, admit us 'mongst the blest.

Thomas Heywood.

35 A HYMN ON THE NATIVITY OF MY SAVIOUR

I SING the birth was born to-night,
The Author both of life and Light;
The Angel so did sound it,
And like the ravished shepherds said,
Who saw the light, and were afraid,
Yet searched, and true they found it.

The Son of God, the Eternal King,
That did us all salvation bring,
And freed the soul from danger;
He whom the whole world could not take,
The Word, which Heaven and Earth did make,
Was now laid in a manger.

The Father's wisdom willed it so,
The Son's obedience knew no No.
Both wills were in one stature,
And as that wisdom had decreed,
The Word was now made Flesh indeed,
And took on Him our nature.

What comfort by Him do we win,
Who made Himself the price of sin
To make us heirs of glory?
To see this Babe all innocence,
A Martyr born in our defence:
Can man forget this story?

Ben Jonson.

36 A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER *

WILT Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;
For I have more.

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sins their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by Thyself that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine as He shines now and heretofore:
And having done that, Thou hast done;
I fear no more.

John Donne.

37 A LITANY *

FROM being anxious or secure,
Dead clods of sadness, or light squibs of mirth,
From thinking that great courts immure
All, or no happiness, or that this earth
Is only for our prison framed,
Or that Thou'rt covetous
To them whom Thou lovest, or that they are maimed
From reaching this world's sweet who seek Thee thus,
With all their might, good Lord, deliver us.

From needing anger to be good,
From owing Thee yesterday's tears to-day,
From trusting so much to Thy blood
That in that hope we wound our soul away,
From bribing Thee with alms, to excuse
Some sin more burdenous,

From light affecting, in religion, news,
From thinking us all soul, neglecting thus
Our mutual duties, Lord, deliver us.

That learning, Thine ambassador,
From Thine allegiance we never tempt;
That beauty, paradise's flower
For physic made, from poison be exempt,
That wit—born apt high good to do—
By dwelling lazily
On nature's nothing be not nothing too;
That our affections kill us not, nor die;
Hear us weak echoes, O Thou Ear and Eye.

Son of God, hear us, and since Thou
By taking our blood, owest it us again,
Gain to Thyself, and us allow;
And let not both us and Thyself be slain;
O Lamb of God, which took'st our sin,
Which could not stick to Thee,
O let it not return to us again;
But patient and physician being free,
As sin is nothing, let it nowhere be.

John Donne.

38 SONNET

As due by many titles, I resign
Myself to Thee, O God. First, I was made
By Thee and for Thee, and when I was decayed,
Thy blood bought that the which before was Thine;
I am Thy son, made with Thyself to shine,
Thy servant, whose pains Thou hast still repaid,
Thy sheep, Thine image, and, till I betrayed
Myself, a temple of Thy Spirit divine.
Why doth the devil, then, usurp on me?
Why doth he steal, nay ravish that 's Thy right?
Except Thou rise, and for Thine own work fight,
Oh, I shall soon despair, when I shall see
That Thou lovest mankind well, yet wilt not choose me,
And Satan hates me, yet is loth to lose me.

John Donne.

39 SONNET

THOU hast made me, and shall Thy work decay?
Repair me now, for now my end doth haste;
I run to Death, and Death meets me as fast,
And all my pleasures are like yesterday.
I dare not move my dim eyes any way;
Despair behind, and Death before doth cast
Such terror, and my feeble flesh doth waste
By sin in it, which it towards Hell doth weigh.
Only Thou art above, and when towards Thee
By Thy leave I can look, I rise again;
But our old subtle foe so tempteth me,
That not one hour myself I can sustain.
Thy grace may wing me to prevent his art
And Thou like adamant draw mine iron heart.

John Donne.

40 RESURRECTION

AT the round earth's imagined corners blow
Your trumpets, angels: and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go,
All whom the Flood did, and fire shall o'erthrow;
All whom war, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despair, law, chance hath slain; and you whose eyes
Shall behold God, and never taste death's woe.
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space,
For, if above all these my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of Thy grace,
When we are there: here on this lowly ground
Teach me how to repent; for that 's as good
As if Thou hadst sealed my pardon with Thy blood.

John Donne.

41 HYMN TO GOD, MY GOD, IN MY SICKNESS *

SINCE I am coming to that holy room,
Where with the choir of saints for evermore,
I shall be made Thy music; as I come.
I tune the instrument here at the door,
And what I must do then, think here before.

Whilst my physicians by their love are grown
Cosmographers, and I their map, who lie
Flat on this bed, that by them may be shown
That this is my south-west discovery,
Per fretum febris, by these straits to die.

I joy, that in these straits I see my west;
For though these currents yield return to none,
What shall my west hurt me? As west and east
In all flat maps—and I am one—are one,
So death doth touch the resurrection.

Is the Pacific Sea my home? Or are
The eastern riches? Is Jerusalem?
Anyan[1], and Magellan, and Gibraltar,
All straits, and none but straits are ways to them,
Whether where Japhet dwelt, or Cham, or Sem.

We think that Paradise and Calvary,
Christ's cross and Adam's tree, stood in one place;
Look, Lord, and find both Adams met in me;
As the first Adam's sweat surrounds my face,
May the last Adam's blood my soul embrace!

So in His purple wrapped receive me, Lord,
By these His thorns give me His other crown;
And as to others' souls I preached Thy word,
Be this my text, my sermon to mine own,—
'Therefore, that He may raise, the Lord throws down.'

John Donne.

[1] Bering.

42 A HYMN TO MY REDEEMER *

SAVIOUR of mankind, Man, Emmanuel,
Who sinless died for sin, Who vanquished hell;
The first-fruits of the grave; whose life did give
Light to our darkness; in whose death we live;
O strengthen Thou my faith, correct my will,
That mine may Thine obey; protect me still,
So that the latter death may not devour
My soul sealed with Thy seal. So in the hour
When Thou, whose body sanctified this tomb,
Unjustly judged, a glorious Judge shalt come
To judge the world with justice, by that sign
I may be known, and entertained for Thine.

George Sandys.

43 PSALM XXXIX *

I SAID, I will my ways observe,
Lest I should swerve:
With bit and reins my tongue keep in,
Too prone to sin.
Nor to their calumny reply,
Who glory in impiety.

I like a statue silent stood,
Dumb even to good:
My sorrows boiling in my breast
Exiled my rest:
But when my heart, incensed with wrong,
Grew hot, I gave my grief a tongue.

Of those few days I have to spend,
And my last end,
Inform me, Lord, that I may so
My frailty know.
My time is made short as a span,
As nothing is the age of man.

Man nothing is but vanity,
Though throned on high;
Walks like a shadow, and in vain
Turmoils with pain:
He heaps up wealth with wretched care,
Yet knows not who shall prove his heir.

His beauty wasted like a cloth
Gnawn by the moth;
Himself a short-lived vanity,
And born to die.
Lord, to my prayers incline Thine ear,
And Thy afflicted servant hear.

George Sandys.

44 FOND SOUL *

FOND soul, is this
Thy way to bliss?
Grasp both the Indies, let thy mighty hand
The iron North and golden South command;
Transcend the moon,
Fasten thy throne
Above the fixèd stars: above expressions,
Above thy thought, enlarge thy vast possessions:
Fond soul, all this
Cannot make up thy bliss.

Fond soul, thy birth
Is not of Earth,
Or Heaven: thou Earth and Heaven itself survivest:
Though born in time, thou dying time outlivest.
They fail, deceive thee;
They age, die, leave thee;
Soar up, immortal spirit, and mounting fly
Into the arms of great Eternity;
Not Heaven or Earth,
He, He, thy end and birth.

Phineas Fletcher.

45 WHO CAN FORGET? *

WHO can forget—never to be forgot—
The time that all the world in slumber lies,
When, like the stars, the singing angels shot
To earth, and Heaven awakèd all his eyes,
To see another sun at midnight rise
On earth? Was never sight of equal fame;
For God before, man like Himself did frame,
But God Himself now like a mortal man became.

A Child He was, and had not learnt to speak,
That with His word the world before did make;
His mother's arms Him bore, He was so weak,
That with one hand the vaults of Heaven could shake;
See how small room my infant Lord doth take
Whom all the world is not enough to hold!
Who of His years, or of His age hath told?
Never such age so young, never a child so old!

And yet but newly He was infanted,
And yet already He was sought to die;
Yet scarcely born, already banishèd;
Not able yet to go, and forced to fly:
But scarcely fled away, when, by and by,
The tyrant's sword with blood is all defiled
And Rachel for her sons, with fury wild,
Cries, 'O thou cruel king, and O my sweetest child!'

The angels carolled loud their song of peace;
The cursed oracles were stricken dumb;
To see their Shepherd the poor shepherds press;
To see their King the kingly sophies [1] come;
And them to guide unto his Master's home,
A star comes dancing up the Orient,
That springs for joy over the strawy tent,
Where gold, to make their Prince a crown, they all present.

Giles Fletcher.

[1] wise men.

46 CHRIST'S TRIUMPH

Toss up your heads, ye everlasting gates,
And let the Prince of Glory enter in;
At whose brave volley of sidereal states
The sun to blush and stars grow pale were seen;
When leaping first from Earth He did begin
To climb His angels' wings: then open hang
Your crystal doors. So all the chorus sang
Of heavenly birds, as to the stars they nimbly sprang.

Hark, how the floods clap their applauding hands,
The pleasant valleys singing for delight;
The wanton mountains dance about the lands,
The while the fields, struck with the heavenly light,
Set all their flowers a-smiling at the sight;
The trees laugh with their blossoms, and the sound
Of the triumphant shout of praise that crowned
The flaming Lamb, breaking through heaven, hath passage found.

Out leap the antique patriarchs, all in haste,
To see the powers of Hell in triumph led,
And with small stars a garland interchased
Of olive leaves they bore to crown His head,
That was before with thorns degloried:
After them flew the prophets brightly stoled
In shining lawn, and wimpled manifold,
Striking their ivory harps, strung all in chords of gold;

To which the saints victorious carols sung,
Ten thousand saints at once, that with the sound
The hollow vaults of Heaven for triumph rung:
The Cherubim their clamours did confound
With all the rest, and clapped their wings around:
Down from their thrones the Dominations flow,
And at His feet their crowns and sceptres throw,
And all the princely souls fell on their faces low.

Nor can the martyrs' wounds them stay behind,
But out they rush among the Heavenly crowd,
Seeking their Heaven out of their Heaven to find,
Sounding their silver trumpets out so loud,
That the shrill noise broke through the starry cloud,
And all the virgin souls in pure array
Come dancing forth and making joyous play:
So Him they lead along, into the courts of day.

So Him they lead into the courts of day,
Where never war nor wounds abide Him more;
But in that house eternal peace doth play,
Acquieting the souls that now before
Their way to Heaven through their own blood did score,
But now, estrangèd from all misery
As far as Heaven and Earth discoasted lie,
Swelter in waves of quiet immortality.

Gaze but upon the house where man embowers;
With flowers and rushes pavèd is his way,
Where all the creatures are his servitors;
The winds do sweep his chambers every day,
And clouds do wash his rooms; the ceiling gay,
Starrèd aloft, the gilded knobs embrave[1]:
If such a house God to another gave,
How shine those glittering courts He for Himself will have!

Here let my Lord hang up His conquering lance,
And bloody armour, with late slaughter warm,
And looking down on His weak militants
Behold His saints, midst of their hot alarm,
Hang all their golden hopes upon His arm;
And in this lower field dispacing wide,
Through windy thoughts that would their sails misguide,
Anchor their fleshly ships fast in His wounded side.

Giles Fletcher.

[1] adorn.

47 THE WORLD *

OF this fair volume which we 'World' do name,
If we the sheets and leaves could turn with care,
Of Him Who it corrects, and did it frame
We clear might read the art and wisdom rare,
Find out His power which wildest powers doth tame,
His providence extending everywhere,
His justice, which proud rebels doth not spare,
In every page, no period of the same:
But silly we, like foolish children, rest
Well pleased with coloured vellum, leaves of gold,
Fair dangling ribbands, leaving what is best,
On the great Writer's sense ne'er taking hold;
Or if by chance we stay our minds on aught,
It is some picture on the margin wrought.

William Drummond.

48 THE GREATEST WONDER

To spread the azure canopy of Heaven,
And spangle it all with sparks of burning gold;
To place this ponderous globe of Earth so even
That it should all, and nought should it uphold;
With motions strange to endue the planets seven,
And Jove to make so mild, and Mars so bold;
To temper what is moist, dry, hot, and cold,
Of all their jars that sweet accords are given;
Lord, to Thy wisdom's nought, nought to Thy might;
But that Thou shouldst, Thy glory laid aside,
Come basely in mortality to bide,
And die for those deserved an endless night;
A wonder is, so far above our wit,
That angels stand amazed to think on it.

William Drummond.

49 A PSALM FOR CHRISTMAS DAY MORNING *

FAIREST of morning lights appear,
Thou blest and gaudy day,
On whom was born our Saviour dear,
Make haste and come away.

This day prevents His day of doom,
His mercy now is nigh;
The mighty God of Love is come,
The Dayspring from on high.

Behold the great Creator makes
Himself an house of clay,
A robe of Virgin flesh He takes
Which He will wear for aye.

Hark, hark, the wise Eternal Word
Like a weak infant cries;
In form of servant is the Lord,
And God in cradle lies.

This wonder struck the world amazed,
It shook the starry frame;
Squadrons of Spirits stood and gazed,
Then down in troops they came.

Glad shepherds ran to view this sight,
A quire of Angels sings,
And Eastern Sages with delight
Adore this King of kings.

Join then all hearts that are not stone,
And all our voices prove,
To celebrate this Holy One,
The God of Peace and Love.

Thomas Pestel.

50 A GENERAL INVITATION TO PRAISE

COME, O come, in pious lays
Sound we God Almighty's praise;
Hither bring, in one consent,
Heart and voice and instrument.
Music add of every kind,
Sound the trump, the cornet wind;
Strike the viol, touch the lute;
Let no tongue nor string be mute,
Nor a creature dumb be found,
That hath either voice or sound.

Let those things which do not live,
In still music praises give;
Lowly pipe, ye worms that creep,
On the earth, or in the deep;
Loud aloft your voices strain,
Beasts and monsters of the main;
Birds, your warbling treble sing;
Clouds, your peals of thunders ring;
Sun and moon, exalted higher,
And bright stars, augment the quire.

Come, ye sons of human race,
In this chorus take your place;
And, amid the mortal throng,
Be you masters of the song.
Angels and supernal powers,
Be the noblest tenor yours;
Let in praise of God the sound
Run a never-ending round,
That our song of praise may be
Everlasting as is He.

George Wither.

51 A ROCKING HYMN *

SWEET baby, sleep: what ails my dear?
What ails my darling thus to cry?
Be still, my child, and lend thine ear
To hear me sing thy lullaby.
My pretty lamb, forbear to weep;
Be still, my dear; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou blessed soul, what canst thou fear?
What thing to thee can mischief do?
Thy God is now thy father dear;
His holy spouse, thy mother too.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

While thus thy lullaby I sing
For thee great blessings ripening be:
Thine eldest Brother is a King,
And hath a kingdom bought for thee.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

Sweet baby, sleep, and nothing fear;
For, whosoever thee offends,
By thy Protector threatened are,
And God and angels are thy friends.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

When God with us was dwelling here,
In little babes He took delight.
Such innocents as thou, my dear,
Are ever precious in His sight.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

A little infant once was He,
And strength in weakness then was laid
Upon His Virgin Mother's knee,
That power to thee might be conveyed.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

The King of kings, when He was born,
Had not so much for outward ease;
By Him such dressings were not worn,
Nor such like swaddling-clothes as these.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

Within a manger lodged thy Lord,
Where oxen lay, and asses fed;
Warm rooms we do to thee afford,
An easy cradle or a bed.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou hast yet more to perfect this,
A promise, and an earnest got
Of gaining everlasting bliss,
Though thou, my babe, perceivest it not.
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

George Wither.

52 TO FIND GOD *

WEIGH me the fire; or canst thou find
A way to measure out the wind?
Distinguish all those floods that are
Mixed in the watery theatre;
And taste thou them as saltless there,
As in their channel first they were.
Tell me the people that do keep
Within the kingdoms of the deep;
Or fetch me back that cloud again,
Beshivered into seeds of rain;
Tell me the motes, dusts, sands, and spears
Of corn, when summer shakes his ears;
Shew me that world of stars, and whence
They noiseless spill their influence:
This if thou canst; then shew me Him
That rides the glorious cherubim.

Robert Herrick.

53 NO COMING TO GOD WITHOUT CHRIST

GOOD and great God, how should I fear
To come to Thee, if Christ not there;
Could I but think He would not be
Present to plead my cause for me;
To Hell I'd rather run, than I
Would see Thy Face, and He not by.

Robert Herrick.

54 THE WHITE ISLAND

IN this world, the Isle of Dreams,
While we sit by sorrow's streams,
Tears and terrors are our themes
Reciting:

But when once from hence we fly,
More and more approaching nigh
Unto young Eternity
Uniting:

In that whiter Island, where
Things are evermore sincere;
Candour[1] here, and lustre there
Delighting:

There no monstrous fancies shall
Out of Hell an horror call,
To create, or cause at all
Affrighting.

There in calm and cooling sleep
We our eyes shall never steep;
But eternal watch shall keep,
Attending

Pleasures, such as shall pursue
Me immortalized, and you;
And fresh joys, as never too
Have ending.

Robert Herrick.

[1] whiteness.

55 SIN

THERE is no evil that we do commit,
But hath the extraction of some good from it:
As when we sin, God the great Chymist thence
Draws out the elixar of true penitence.

Robert Herrick.

56 LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

IN the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When I lie within my bed,
Sick in heart and sick in head,
And with doubts discomforted,
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When the house doth sigh and weep,
And the world is drowned in sleep,
Yet mine eyes the watch do keep;
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When the artless[1] doctor sees
No one hope, but of his fees,
And his skill runs on the lees;
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When his potion and his pill,
Has, or none, or little skill,
Meet for nothing, but to kill,
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When the passing-bell doth toll,
And the furies in a shoal
Come to fright a parting soul;
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

[1] without art, or skill.

When the tapers now burn blue,
And the comforters are few,
And that number more than true;
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When the priest his last hath prayed,
And I nod to what is said,
'Cause my speech is now decayed;
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When, God knows, I'm tossed about,
Either with despair, or doubt;
Yet before the glass be out,
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When the Tempter me pursu'th
With the sins of all my youth,
And half damns me with untruth;
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When the flames and hellish cries
Fright mine ears and fright mine eyes
And all terrors me surprise,
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

When the Judgement is revealed,
And that opened which was sealed,
When to Thee I have appealed;
Sweet Spirit comfort me.

Robert Herrick.

57 ETERNITY

O YEARS, and Age, Farewell:
Behold I go,
Where I do know
Infinity to dwell.

And these mine eyes shall see
All times, how they
Are lost in the Sea
Of vast Eternity.

Where never moon shall sway
The stars; but she,
And night, shall be
Drowned in one endless Day.

Robert Herrick.

58 ALL IS VANITY *

LET wit and all her studied plots effect
The best they can:
Let smiling fortune prosper and perfect
What wit began;
Let earth advise with both, and so project
A happy man;
Let wit or fawning fortune vie their best;
He may be blest
With all that earth can give: but earth can give no rest.

Whose gold is double with a careful hand,
His cares are double,
The pleasure, honour, wealth of sea and land
Bring but a trouble;
The world itself, and all the world's command,
Is but a bubble.
The strong desires of man's insatiate breast
May stand possessed
Of all that earth can give; but earth can give no rest.

The world 's a seeming Paradise, but her own
And man's tormentor;
Appearing fixed, yet but a rolling stone
Without a tenter [1];
It is a vast circumference, where none
Can find a centre.
Of more than earth, can earth make none possessed;
And he that least
Regards this restless world, shall in this world find rest.

[1] a hook to hold it firm.

True rest consists not in the oft revying[1]
Of worldly dross;
Earth's miry purchase is not worth the buying;
Her gain is loss;
Her rest but giddy toil, if not relying
Upon her cross.
How worldlings droyl[2] for trouble! That fond breast
That is possessed
Of earth without a cross has earth without a rest.

Francis Quarles.

59 WHOM HAVE I IN HEAVEN BUT THEE? AND WHAT DESIRE I ON EARTH IN RESPECT OF THEE?

I LOVE, and have some cause to love, the earth:
She is my Maker's creature, therefore good:
She is my mother, for she gave me birth;
She is my tender nurse; she gives me food:
But what's a creature, Lord, compared with Thee?
Or what's my mother, or my nurse to me?

I love the air: her dainty sweets refresh
My drooping soul, and to new sweets invite me;
Her shrill-mouthed choir sustain me with their flesh,
And with their Polyphonian[3] notes delight me:
But what's the air or all the sweets that she
Can bless my soul withal, compared to Thee?

I love the sea: she is my fellow creature;
My careful purveyor; she provides me store:
She walls me round; she makes my diet greater;
She wafts my treasure from a foreign shore;
But Lord of oceans, when compared with Thee,
What is the ocean, or her wealth to me?

[1] bidding for. [2] drudge. [3] many-voiced.

To Heaven's high city I direct my journey,
Whose spangled suburbs entertain mine eye;
Mine eye, by contemplation's great attorney,
Transcends the crystal pavement of the sky:
But what is Heaven, great God, compared to Thee?
Without Thy presence Heaven 's no Heaven to me.

In having all things and not Thee, what have I?
Not having Thee, what have my labours got?
Let me enjoy but Thee, what further crave I?
And having Thee alone, what have I not?
I wish nor sea, nor land, nor would I be
Possessed of Heaven, Heaven unpossessed of Thee.

Francis Quarles.

60 EASTER

THE SONG

I GOT me flowers to straw Thy way,
I got me boughs off many a tree;
But Thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st Thy sweets along with Thee.

The sun arising in the East
Though he give light, and the East perfume,
If they should offer to contest
With Thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many suns to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred, but we miss:
There is but one, and that one ever.

George Herbert.

61 MATINS

I CANNOT ope mine eyes,
But Thou art ready there to catch
My morning soul and sacrifice;
That we must needs for that day make a match.

My God, what is a heart?
Silver, or gold, or precious stone,
Or star, or rainbow, or a part
Of all these things, or all of them in one?

My God, what is a heart,
That Thou shouldst it so eye, and woo,
Pouring upon it all Thy art,
As if that Thou hadst nothing else to do?

Indeed, man's whole estate
Amounts, and richly, to serve Thee:
He did not Heaven and Earth create,
Yet studies them, not Him by whom they be.

Teach me Thy love to know;
That this new light which now I see,
May both the work and Workman show;
Then by a sunbeam I will climb to Thee.

George Herbert.

62 ANA-{MARY / ARMY}-GRAM

How well her name an Army doth present,
In whom the Lord of Hosts did pitch His tent.

George Herbert.

63 SUBMISSION *

But that Thou art my wisdom, Lord,
And both mine eyes are Thine,
My mind would be extremely stirred
For missing my design.

Were it not better to bestow
Some place and power on me?
Then should Thy praises with me grow,
And share in my degree.

But when I thus dispute and grieve,
I do resume my fight;
And pilfering what I once did give,
Disseize[1] Thee of Thy right.

How know I if Thou shouldst me raise,
That I should then raise Thee?
Perhaps great places and Thy praise
Do not so well agree.

Wherefore unto my gift I stand;
I will no more advise[2]:
Only do Thou lend me a hand,
Since Thou hast both mine eyes.

George Herbert.

64 MAN

My God, I heard this day
That none doth build a stately habitation,
But he that means to dwell therein.
What house more stately hath there been,
Or can be, than is Man? to whose creation
All things are in decay.

For Man is everything,
And more: he is a tree, yet bears more fruit;
A beast, yet is, or should be, more:
Reason and speech we only bring;
Parrots may thank us if they are not mute,
They go upon the score.

Man is all symmetry,
Full of proportions, one limb to another,
And all to all the world besides;
Each part may call the farthest, brother,
For head with foot hath private amity,
And both with moons and tides.

[1] deprive. [2] take thought.

Nothing hath got so far,
But Man hath caught and kept it as his prey;
His eyes dismount the highest star;
He is in little all the sphere;
Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they
Find their acquaintance there.

For us the winds do blow;
The Earth doth rest, Heaven move, and fountains flow;
Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight or as our treasure;
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure.

The stars have us to bed;
Night draws the curtain, which the sun withdraws;
Music and light attend our head.
All things unto our flesh are kind
In their descent and being; to our mind
In their ascent and cause.

Each thing is full of duty:
Waters united are our navigation;
Distinguishèd, our habitation;
Below, our drink; above, our meat;
Both are our cleanliness. Hath one such beauty!
Then how are all things neat!

More servants wait on Man
Than he'll take notice of: in every path
He treads down that which doth befriend him
When sickness makes him pale and wan.
O mighty love! Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him.

Since then, my God, Thou hast
So brave a palace built, O dwell in it,
That it may dwell with Thee at last!
Till then afford us so much wit,
That, as the world serves us, we may serve Thee,
And both Thy servants be.

George Herbert.

65 THE QUIP

THE merry World did on a day
With his train-bands and mates agree
To meet together where I lay,
And all in sport to jeer at me.

First Beauty crept into a rose;
Which when I pluck'd not, 'Sir,' said she,
'Tell me, I pray, whose hands are those?'
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then Money came, and chinking still,
'What tune is this, poor man?' said he;
'I heard in music you had skill:'
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then came brave Glory puffing by
In silks that whistled, who but he?
He scarce allowed me half an eye:
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then came quick Wit and Conversation,
And he would needs a comfort be,
And, to be short, make an oration:
But Thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Yet when the hour of Thy design
To answer these fine things shall come,
Speak not at large; say, I am Thine,
And then they have their answer home.

George Herbert.

66 THE COLLAR

I STRUCK the board, and cried No more;
I will abroad,
What shall I ever sigh and pine?
My lines and life are free; free as the road,
Loose as the wind, as large as store.
Shall I be still in suit?

Have I no harvest but a thorn
To let me blood, and not restore
What I have lost with cordial fruit?
Sure there was wine,
Before my sighs did dry it: there was corn,
Before my tears did drown it.
Is the year only lost to me?
Have I no bays to crown it?
No flowers, no garlands gay? all blasted,
All wasted?
Not so, my heart! but there is fruit,
And thou hast hands:
Recover all thy sigh-blown age
On double pleasures: leave thy cold dispute
Of what is fit and not: forsake thy cage,
Thy rope of sands,
Which petty thoughts have made, and made to thee
Good cable, to enforce and draw,
And be thy law,
While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.
Away! take heed!
I will abroad.
Call in thy death's head there; tie up thy fears;
He that forbears
To suit and serve his need,
Deserves his load.
But as I raved, and grew more fierce and wild
At every word,
Methought I heard One calling, *Child*:
And I replied, *My Lord*.

George Herbert.

67 THE PULLEY

When God at first made Man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by,
'Let us,' said He, 'pour on him all we can;
Let the world's riches, which dispersèd lie,
Contract into a span.'

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

'For if I should,' said He,
'Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature;
So both should losers be.

'Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to My breast.'

George Herbert.

68 THE POSY[1]

LET wits contest,
And with their words and posies windows fill;
'Less than the least
Of all Thy mercies,' is my posy still.

This on my ring,
This by my picture, in my book I write;
Whether I sing,
Or say, or dictate, this is my delight.

Invention, rest;
Comparisons, go play; wit, use thy will;
'Less than the least
Of all God's mercies' is my posy still.

George Herbert.

[1] a motto engraved in a ring.

69 LOVE

LOVE bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lacked anything.

'A guest,' I answered, 'worthy to be here';
Love said, 'You shall be he.'
'I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on Thee.'
Love took my hand, and smiling, did reply,
'Who made the eyes but I?'

'Truth, Lord, but I have marred them; let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.'
'And know you not,' says Love, 'Who bore the blame?'
'My dear, then I will serve.'
'You must sit down,' says Love, 'and taste My meat.'
So I did sit and eat.

George Herbert.

70 TO MY WORTHY FRIEND, GEORGE SANDYS*

ON HIS TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS

I PRESS not to the quire, nor dare I greet
The holy place with my unhallowed feet;
My unwashed Muse pollutes not things divine,
Nor mingles her profaner notes with thine;
Here humbly waiting at the porch she stays,
And with glad ears sucks in thy sacred lays.
So, devout penitents of old were wont,
Some without door, and some beneath the font,

To stand and hear the Church's liturgies,
Yet not assist the solemn exercise:
Sufficeth her that she a lay place gain,
To trim thy vestments or but bear thy train;
Though not in tune nor wing she reach thy dark,
Her lyric feet may dance before the ark.
Who knows, but that her wandering eyes that run
Now hunting glow-worms, may adore the Sun?
A pure flame may, shot by Almighty power
Into her breast, the earthly flame devour.
My eyes in penitential dew may steep
That brine which they for sensual love did weep.
So (though 'gainst Nature's course) fire may be quenched
With fire, and water be with water drenched;
Perhaps my restless soul, tired with pursuit
Of mortal beauty, seeking without fruit
Contentment there, which hath not, when enjoyed,
Quenched all her thirst, nor satisfied, though cloyed,
Weary of her vain search below, above
In the first fair may find the immortal Love.
Prompted by thy example, then, no more
In moulds of clay will I my God adore;
But tear those idols from my heart, and write
What His blest Spirit, not fond love shall indite.
Then I no more shall court the verdant bay,
But the dry leafless Trunk on Golgotha;
And rather strive to gain from thence one thorn,
Than all the flourishing wreaths by Laureates worn.

Thomas Carew.

71 INVITATION *

TURN in, my Lord, turn in to me:
My heart 's an homely place;
But Thou canst make corruption flee,
And fill it with Thy grace.
So furnished it will be brave;
And a rich dwelling Thou shalt have.

It was Thy lodging once before,
  It builded was by Thee:
But I to sin set ope the door,
  It rendered[1] was by me;
And so Thy building once defaced
And in Thy room another placed.

But he usurps, the right is Thine:
  Oh dispossess him, Lord.
Do Thou but say, *This heart is Mine*,
  He 's gone at the first word.
Thy word 's Thy will, Thy will 's Thy power,
Thy time is always; Now 's mine hour.

  Now say to sin, *Depart*;
  And, *Son, give Me thine heart.*
Thou, that by saying, *Let it be*, didst make it;
Canst, if Thou wilt, by saying, *Give't Me*, take it.

Christopher Harvey.

72 A HYMN OF PRAISE*

ANCIENT of Days! To whom all times are Now;
  Before whom seraphims do bow,
Though highest creatures, yet to their Creator, low!

Who art by light-surrounded powers obeyed,
  Heaven's host Thy ministering spirits made,
Clothed with ubiquity, to whom all light is shade!

Whose thunder-clasping Hand does grasp the shoal
  Of total Nature, and unroll
The spangled canopy of Heaven from pole to pole!

Who on the clouds and winds, Thy chariot, ridest;
  And, bridling wildest storms, them guidest;
Who, moveless, all dost move; Who, changing all,
  abidest!

[1] surrendered.

Ye winged heroes, whom all bliss embowers,
To Him in anthems strain your powers,
Whose sea of goodness has no shore, whose age no hours!

Blest sight to see Heaven's ordered host to move
In legions, glistering all above,
Whose armour is true zeal, whose banner is pure love!

Edward Benlowes.

73 EPILOGUE

LORD, as Thou mad'st (most powerful One in Three)
The world of nothing; so let me
Make nothing of the world, but make my all in Thee.

Pardon the by-steps that my soul has trod,
Most great, good, glorious, gracious God;
Seal Thou the bill of my divorce to Earth's dull clod.

Check not my hope, but spur my fear to Thee,
Virtue to court and vice to flee;
Love, lend thou me thy spur; Fear, thou my bridle be.

From hence to run in heavenly paths I'll strive;
My slender pen to the world I give;
My only study shall be how to live, to live.

None blest but those who, when last trump shall send
Its summons, find the Judge their friend.
The end doth crown the work; great God crown Thou my end.

Edward Benlowes.

74 DOMINE, LABIA MEA APERIES

No monument of me remain,
My memory rust
In the same marble with my dust,
Ere I the spreading laurel gain,
By writing wanton or profane.

Ye glorious wonders of the skies,
  Shine still, bright stars,
The Almighty's mystic characters;
I'll not your beauteous lights surprise,
To illuminate a woman's eyes.

Nor, to perfume her veins, will I
  In each one set
The purple of the violet:
The untouched flower may grow and die
Safe from my fancy's injury.

Open my lips, great God, and then
  I'll soar above
The humble flight of carnal love.
Upward to Thee I'll force my pen,
And trace no path of vulgar men.

William Habington.

75 NOX NOCTI INDICAT SCIENTIAM*

WHEN I survey the bright
  Celestial sphere,
So rich with jewels hung, that Night
Doth like an Ethiop bride appear;

My soul her wings doth spread
  And heavenward flies,
The Almighty's mysteries to read
In the large volumes of the skies.

For the bright firmament
  Shoots forth no flame
So silent, but is eloquent
In speaking the Creator's name.

No unregarded star
  Contracts its light
Into so small a character,
Removed far from our human sight,

But if we steadfast look,
We shall discern
In it, as in some holy book,
How man may heavenly knowledge learn.

It tells the conqueror,
That far-stretched power,
Which his proud dangers traffic for,
Is but the triumph of an hour:

That from the farthest North,
Some nation may
Yet undiscovered issue forth,
And o'er his new-got conquest sway:

Some nation yet shut in
With hills of ice
May be let out to scourge his sin,
Till they shall equal him in vice.

And then they likewise shall
Their ruin have,
For as yourselves your empires fall,
And every kingdom hath a grave.

Thus those celestial fires,
Though seeming mute,
The fallacy of our desires
And all the pride of life confute.

For they have watched since first
The world had birth;
And found sin in itself accurst,
And nothing permanent on earth.

William Habington.

76 EVENING HYMN *

THE night is come, like to the day;
Depart not Thou, great God, away.
Let not my sins, black as the night,
Eclipse the lustre of Thy light.

Keep still in my horizon; for to me
The sun makes not the day, but Thee.
Thou whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples sentry keep;
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,
Whose eyes are open while mine close;
Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.
While I do rest, my soul advance;
Make my sleep a holy trance,
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought;
And with as active vigour run
My course as doth the nimble sun.
Sleep is a death; O make me try,
By sleeping, what it is to die:
And as gently lay my head
On my grave, as now my bed.
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me
Awake again at last with Thee.
And thus assured, behold I lie
Securely, or to wake or die.
These are my drowsy days; in vain
I do now wake to sleep again.
O come the hour when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever!

Sir Thomas Browne.

77 OF DIVINE LOVE *

THE fear of Hell, or aiming to be blest,
Savours too much of private interest.
This moved not Moses, nor the zealous Paul,
Who for their friends abandoned soul and all:
A Greater yet from Heaven to Hell descends,
To save, and make His enemies His friends.
What line of praise can fathom such a love,
Which reached the lowest bottom from above?

The royal prophet,[1] that extended grace
From Heaven to Earth, measured but half that space,
The Law was regnant and confined his thought;
Hell was not conquered when that poet wrote;
Heaven was scarce heard of, until He came down
To make the region where love triumphs known.

The early love of creatures yet unmade,
To frame the world the Almighty did persuade;
For love it was that first created light,
Moved on the waters, chased away the night
From the rude chaos, and bestowed new grace
On things disposed of to their proper place;
Some to rest here, and some to shine above:
Earth, Sea, and Heaven were all the effects of love.

And love would be returned. But there was none
That to themselves or others yet were known:
The world a palace was without a guest,
Till one appears that must excel the rest:
One like the Author, whose capacious mind
Might by the glorious work the Maker find;
Worthy alone to celebrate His name
For such a gift, and tell from whence it came.
Birds sing His praises in a wilder note;
But not with lasting numbers, and with thought,
Man's great prerogative. But above all
His grace abounds in His new favourite's fall.

If He create it is a world He makes,
If He be angry the Creation shakes:
From His just wrath our guilty parents fled;
He cursed the Earth, but bruised the serpent's head.
Amidst the storm His bounty did exceed,
In the rich promise of the Virgin's seed.
Though justice death as satisfaction craves,
Love finds a way to pluck us from our graves.

Edmund Waller.

[1] David.

78 GOD'S TWO DWELLINGS *

LORD, Thou hast told us that there be
Two dwellings which belong to Thee,
And those two, that 's the wonder,
Are far asunder.

The one the highest Heaven is,
The mansions of eternal bliss;
The other 's the contrite
And humble sprite.

Not like the princes of the earth,
Who think it much below their birth
To come within the door
Of people poor.

No, such is Thy humility,
That though Thy dwelling be on high,
Thou dost Thyself abase
To the lowest place.

Where'er Thou seest a sinful soul
Deploring his offences foul,
To him Thou wilt descend,
And be his friend.

Thou wilt come in, and with him sup,
And from a low state raise him up,
Till Thou hast made him eat
Blest angels' meat.

Thus Thou wilt him with honour crown
Who in himself is first cast down,
And humbled for his sins,
That Thy love wins.

Though Heaven be high, the gate is low,
And he that comes in there must bow:
The lofty looks shall ne'er
Have entrance there.

O God! since Thou delight'st to rest
In the humble contrite breast,
First make me so to be,
Then dwell with me.

Thomas Washbourne.

79 ODE ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY *

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King
Of wedded Maid and Virgin Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing
That He our deadly forfeit should release,
And with His Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty
Wherewith He wont at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain
To welcome Him to this His new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

See how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode
And lay it lowly at His blessed feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel quire
From out his secret altar touched with hallowed fire.

THE HYMN

It was the winter wild,
While the Heaven-born Child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to Him
Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But He, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;
The hookèd chariot stood
Unstained with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,

Smoothly the waters kist
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean—
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warned them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow
Until their Lord Himself bespake, and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withdrew his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new-enlightened world no more should need;
He saw a greater Sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn
Or ere the point of dawn
Sate simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they then
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet
As never was by mortal finger strook—
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringèd noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Nature, that heard such sound
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling,
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and Earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light
That with long beams the shamefaced night arrayed;
The helmèd Cherubim
And sworded Seraphim
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,
Harping in loud and solemn quire
With unexpressive[1] notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the base of heaven's deep organ blow;
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled vanity

[1] inexpressible.

Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous sin will melt from earthly mould;
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orbed in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between
Throned in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says No;
This must not yet be so;
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
So both Himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those ychained in sleep
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through
the deep;

With such a horrid clang
As on Mount Sinai rang
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:
The aged Earth aghast
With terror of that blast
Shall from the surface to the centre shake.
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread His
throne.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for from this happy day
The old Dragon under ground,
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurpèd sway;
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horrour of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving:
No nightly trance or breathèd spell
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er
And the resounding shore
A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale
Edged with poplar pale
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth
And on the holy hearth
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-battered god of Palestine [1]
And moonèd Ashtaroth
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn:
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

[1] Dagon.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove, or green,
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest Hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrelled anthems dark
The sable-stolèd sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand;
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyne[1];
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Nor Typhon huge, ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to show His Godhead true,
Can in His swaddling bands control the damnèd crew.

So, when the sun in bed
Curtained with cloudy red
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze.

[1] eyes.

But see! the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest;
Time is our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest-teemèd star
Hath fixed her polished car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harnessed Angels sit in order serviceable.

John Milton.

80 AT A SOLEMN MUSIC *

BLEST pair of sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mixed power employ,
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
And to our high-raised phantasy present
That undisturbèd song of pure concent,[1]
Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne
To Him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright seraphim in burning row
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow,
And the cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly:
That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disproportioned sin
Jarred against nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.

[1] harmony.

O may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To His celestial consort[1] us unite,
To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light.

John Milton.

81 ON HIS BLINDNESS

WHEN I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent, which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless,—though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He, returning, chide,—
'Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?'
I fondly ask: But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need
Either man's work or His own gifts: who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best: His state
Is kingly: thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.'

John Milton.

82 CHRISTMAS DAY *

BUT art Thou come, dear Saviour? Hath Thy love
Thus made Thee stoop, and leave Thy throne above
The lofty Heavens, and thus Thyself to dress
In dust to visit mortals? Could no less
A condescension serve? And after all,
The mean reception of a cratch and stall?
Dear Lord, I'll fetch Thee thence; I have a room
'Tis poor, but 'tis my best, if Thou wilt come
Within so small a cell, where I would fain
Mine and the world's Redeemer entertain;
I mean my heart; 'tis sluttish, I confess,
And will not mend Thy lodging, Lord, unless

[1] concert.

Thou send before Thy harbinger, I mean
Thy pure and purging grace, to make it clean,
And sweep its nasty corners; then I'll try
To wash it also with a weeping eye;
And when 'tis swept and washed, I then will go,
And, with Thy leave, I'll fetch some flowers that grow
In Thine own garden, faith, and love to Thee;
With those I'll dress it up; and these shall be
My rosemary and bays; yet when my best
Is done, the room 's not fit for such a Guest.
But here 's the cure; Thy presence, Lord, alone
Will make a stall a court, a cratch a throne.

Sir Matthew Hale.

83 HYMN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT *

COME Holy Spirit, come and breathe
Thy spicy odours on the face
Of our dull region here beneath,
And fill our souls with Thy sweet grace.

Come, and root out the poisonous weeds
Which over-run and choke our lives;
And in our hearts plant Thine own seeds,
Whose quickening power our spirit revives.

First plant the humble violet there,
That dwells secure by dwelling low;
Then let the lily next appear,
And make us chaste, yet fruitful too.

But O, plant all the virtues, Lord,
And let the metaphors alone;
Repeat once more that mighty word,
Thou needst but say, *Let it be done.*

Do then what Thou alone can do,
Do what to Thee so easy is,
Conduct us through this world of woe,
And place us safe in Thine own bliss.

John Austin.

84 THE LOVE OF CHRIST

COME, let's adore the King of Love,
And King of Sufferings too;
For Love it was that brought Him down,
And set Him here in woe.

Love drew Him from His Paradise,
Where flowers that fade not grow;
And planted Him in our poor dust,
Among us weeds below.

Here for a time this heavenly Plant
Fairly grew up and thrived;
Diffused its sweetness all about,
And all in sweetness lived.

But envious frosts and furious storms
So long, so fiercely chide;
This tender Flower at last bowed down,
And hung its head and died.

O narrow thoughts, and narrower speech,
Here your defects confess;
The Life of Christ, the Death of God,
How faintly you express!

Help, O thou Blessed Virgin Root,
Whence this fair Flower did spring,
Help us to raise both heart and voice,
And with more spirit sing.

John Austin.

85 CHARITAS NIMIA

OR

THE DEAR BARGAIN *

LORD, what is man? Why should he cost Thee
So dear? What had his ruin lost Thee?
Lord, what is man that Thou hast overbought
So much a thing of nought?

Alas, sweet Lord, what were't to Thee
If there were no such worms as we?
Heaven ne'er the less still Heaven would be,
Should mankind dwell
In the deep hell.
What have his woes to do with Thee?

Let him go weep
O'er his own wounds;
Seraphims will not sleep,
Nor spheres let fall their faithful rounds.

Still would the youthful spirits sing;
And still Thy spacious palace ring;
Still would those beauteous ministers of light
Burn all as bright,

And bow their flaming heads before Thee;
Still Thrones and Dominations would adore Thee;
Still would those ever-wakeful sons of fire
Keep warm Thy praise
Both nights and days,
And teach Thy loved Name to their noble lyre.

Let froward Dust, then, do its kind,
And give itself for sport to the proud wind.
Why should a piece of peevish clay plead shares
In the Eternity of Thy old cares?
Why shouldst Thou bow Thy awful Breast to see
What mine own madnesses have done with me?

Will the gallant sun
E'er the less glorious run?
Will he hang down his golden head,
Or e'er the sooner seek his western bed,
Because some foolish fly
Grows wanton and will die?

If I were lost in misery,
What was it to Thy Heaven and Thee?
What was it to Thy precious Blood
If my foul heart called for a flood?

What if my faithless soul and I
Would needs fall in
With guilt and sin,
What did the Lamb that He should die ?
What did the Lamb that He should need,
When the wolf sins, Himself to bleed ?

Why should His unstained Breast make good
My blushes with His own Heart Blood ?

O, my Saviour, make me see
How dearly Thou hast paid for me,
That lost again my life may prove,
As then in death, so now in love.

Richard Crashaw.

86 ON THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY *

HARK ! she is called ; the parting hour is come ;
Take thy farewell poor world, Heaven must go home.
A field of heavenly light, purer and brighter
Than the chaste stars whose choice lamps come to light her,
While through the crystal orbs, clearer than they,
She climbs, and makes a far more milky way.

She 's called again ; hark ! how the immortal Dove
Sighs to His silver mate, ' Rise up My love ;
Rise up My fair, My spotless one,
The winter 's past, the rain is gone :
The spring is come, the flowers appear,
No sweets but thou are wanting here.
Come away, My love ;
Come away, My dove ;
Cast off delay :
The court of Heaven is come,
To wait upon thee home ;
Come away, come away,
The flowers appear,
Or quickly would, wert thou once here
The spring is come, or if it stay,
'Tis to keep time with thy delay.

The rain is gone, except so much as we
Detain in needful tears to weep the want of thee.
The winter 's past;
Or, if he make less haste,
His answer is, Why she does so;
If summer come not how can winter go?
Come away, come away.'

She 's called again, and will she go?
When Heaven bids come, who can say No?
Heaven calls her, and she must away:
Heaven will not, and she cannot stay.

Go then, go, glorious, on the golden wings
Of the bright youth of Heaven, that sings
Under so sweet a burden: go,
Since thy great Son will have it so:
And while thou goest, our song and we
Will, as we may reach after thee.

Hail! holy queen of humble hearts,
We in thy praise will have our parts;
And though thy dearest looks must now be light
To none but the blest Heavens, whose bright
Beholders, lost in sweet delight,
Feed for ever their fair sight
With those divinest eyes, which we
And our dark world shall no more see;
Though our poor joys are parted so,
Yet shall our lips never let go
Thy gracious name, but to the last
Our loving song shall hold it fast.

Thy sacred name shall be
Thyself to us, and we
With holy cares will keep it by us.
We to the last
Will hold it fast,
And no Assumption shall deny us.

All the sweetest showers
Of fairest flowers
We'll strew upon it:
Though our sweetness cannot make
It sweeter, they may take
Themselves new sweetness from it.

Maria, men and angels sing,
Maria, mother of our King.
Live rarest princess, and may the bright
Crown of a most incomparable light
Enhance thy radiant brows! O may the best
Of everlasting joys bathe thy white breast!
Live, our chaste love, the holy mirth
Of Heaven, the humble pride of earth:
Live, crown of women, queen of men;
Live, mistress of our song; and when
Our weak desires have done their best
Sweet angels come and sing the rest.

Richard Crashaw.

87 TO A YOUNG GENTLEWOMAN *

DEAR, Heaven-designèd soul,
Among the rest,
Of suitors that besiege your maiden breast,
Why may not I
My fortune try,
And venture to speak one good word,
Not for myself, alas, but for my dearer Lord?

You have seen already in this lower sphere
Of froth and bubbles, what to look for here.
Say, gentle soul, what can you find
But painted shapes,
Peacocks and apes,
Illustrious flies,
Gilded dunghills, glorious[1] lies
Goodly surmises,
And deep disguises,
Oaths of water, words of wind?

[1] boastful.

Truth bids me say, 'tis time you cease to trust
Your soul to any son of dust.
'Tis time you listen to a braver Love,
Which from above
Calls you up higher,
And bids you come
And choose your room
Among His own fair sons of fire;
Where you among
The golden throng,
That watches at His palace doors,
May pass along,
And follow those fair stars of yours;
Stars much to fair and pure to wait upon
The false smiles of a sublunary sun.

Sweet, let me prophesy that at last 'twill prove
Your weary love
Lays up his purer and most precious vows,
And means them for a far more worthy Spouse
Than this world of his can give ye,
Even for Him with whom nor cost,
Nor love, nor labour can be lost;
Him Who never will deceive ye.

Let not my Lord, the mighty Lover
Of souls, disdain that I discover
The hidden art
Of His high stratagem to win your heart.
It was His heavenly art
Kindly to cross you
In your mistaken love,
That at the next remove
Thence He might toss you,
And strike your troubled heart
Home to Himself; to hide it in His Breast,
The bright ambrosial nest
Of love, of life and everlasting rest.
Happy mistake,
That thus shall wake

Your wise soul, never to be won
Now with a love below the sun.
Your first choice fails; O, when you choose again
May it not be amongst the sons of men.

Richard Crashaw.

88 EPIGRAM

WELL, Peter, dost thou wield thy active sword,
Well for thyself, I mean, not for thy Lord:
To strike at ears is to take heed there be
No witness, Peter, of thy perjury.

Richard Crashaw.

89 HYMN FOR ADVENT*

LORD, come away!
Why dost Thou stay?
Thy road is ready; and Thy paths made straight,
With longing expectations wait
The consecration of Thy beauteous feet.
Ride on triumphantly; behold, we lay
Our lusts and proud wills in Thy way!

Hosanna! Welcome to our hearts! Lord, here
Thou hast a temple too; and full as dear
As that of Sion, and as full of sin:
Nothing but thieves and robbers dwell therein:
Enter, and chase them forth, and cleanse the floor:
Crucify them, that they may never more
Profane that holy place
Where Thou hast chose to set Thy face!
And then if our stiff tongues shall be
Mute in the praises of Thy Deity,
The stones out of the temple wall
Shall cry aloud and call
Hosanna! And Thy glorious footsteps greet!

Jeremy Taylor.

90 ON THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

A WINGÈD harbinger from bright Heaven flown
Bespeaks a lodging-room
For the mighty King of Love.
The spotless structure of a virgin womb,
O'er-shadowed with the wings of the blest Dove:
For He was travelling to Earth,
And did desire to lay
By the way,
That He might shift His clothes, and be
A perfect Man as well as we.
How good a God have we, Who for our sake,
To save us from the burning lake,
Did change the order of creation:
At first He made
Man like Himself in His own image; now
In the more blessed reparation
The Heavens bow
Eternity took the measure of a span,
And said
Let us make our self like Man,
And not from man the woman take,
But from the woman Man.
Allelujah: we adore
His name whose goodness hath no store.
Allelujah.

Jeremy Taylor.

91 THE PHILOSOPHER'S DEVOTION *

SING aloud, His praise rehearse,
Who hath made the Universe.
He the boundless Heavens has spread,
All the vital Orbs has kned[1];
He that on Olympus high
Tends His flocks with watchful eye,

[1] kneaded.

And this eye has multiplied
Midst each flock for to reside:
Thus as round about they stray,
Toucheth each with out-stretched ray;
Nimble they hold on their way,
Shaping out their Night and Day.
Summer, Winter, Autumn, Spring,
Their inclinèd Axes bring.
Never slack they; none respires,
Dancing round their central fires.

God is Good, is Wise, is Strong,
Witness all the creature-throng,
Is confessed by every tongue.
All things back from whence they sprung,
As the thankful rivers pay
What they borrowed of the sea.

Now myself I do resign;
Take me whole, I all am Thine.
Save me, God, from Self-desire,
Death's pit, dark Hell's raging fire,
Envy, Hatred, Vengeance, Ire:
Let not Lust my soul bemire.

Quit from these, Thy praise I'll sing,
Loudly sweep the trembling string.
Bear a part, O Wisdom's sons,
Freed from vain Religïons.
Lo! from far I you salute,
Sweetly warbling on my lute,
Indie, Egypt, Araby,
Asia, Greece, and Tartary,
Carmel-tracts and Lebanon,
With the Mountains of the Moon,
From whence muddy Nile doth run;
Or where ever else you won [1]
Breathing in one vital air,
One we are, though distant far.

[1] abide.

Rise at once let 's sacrifice,
Odours sweet perfume the skies.
See how heavenly lightning fires
Hearts inflamed with high aspires!
All the substance of our souls
Up in clouds of incense rolls.
Leave we nothing to ourselves,
Save a voice, what need we else?
Or an hand to wear and tire
On the thankful lute or lyre.

Sing aloud, His praise rehearse
Who hath made the Universe.

Henry More.

92 AN HYMN

UPON THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

THE holy Son of God most high,
For love of Adam's lapsèd race,
Quit the sweet pleasure of the sky
To bring us to that happy place.

His robes of light He laid aside,
Which did His Majesty adorn,
And the frail state of mortals tried,
In human flesh and figure born.

Down from above this Day-Star slid,
Himself in living earth to entomb,
And all His heavenly glory hid
In a pure lowly Virgin's womb.

Whole Quires of Angels loudly sing
The mystery of His sacred birth,
And the blest news to shepherds bring
Filling their watchful souls with mirth.

The Son of God thus man became,
That men the sons of God might be,
And by their second birth regain
A likeness to His Deity.

Henry More.

93 THE EXIT *

My soul go boldly forth,
Forsake this sinful earth,
What hath it been to thee
But pain and sorrow?
And think'st thou it will be
Better to-morrow?

Why art thou for delay?
Thou cam'st not here to stay,
What tak'st thou for thy part
But heavenly pleasure?
Where then should be thy heart
And where's thy treasure?

Christ Who knows all His sheep
Will all in safety keep;
He will not lose His blood,
Nor intercession:
Nor we the purchased good
Of His dear Passion.

I know my God is just,
To Him I wholly trust
All that I have and am
All that I hope for.
All 's sure and seen to Him,
Which here I grope for.

Lord Jesus take my spirit:
I trust Thy love and merit:
Take home this wandering sheep
For Thou hast sought it:
This soul in safety keep
For Thou hast bought it.

Richard Baxter.

94 THE MESSAGE

DEAR Saviour, that my love I might make known
To Thee I sent more messengers than one.
My heart went first, but came not back; my will
I sent Thee next, and that stayed with Thee still;
Then, that the better Thou might'st know my mind,
I sent my intellect, that too stays behind.
Now my soul 's sent: Lord, if that stay with Thee,
O what a happy carcase I shall be.

Sir Edward Sherburne.

95 LOVE *

LOVE I'd of Heaven have bought when He, (this who
Would think ?) both purchase was and seller too.
I offered gold, but gold He did not prize;
I offered gems, but gems He did despise;
I offered all; all He refused yet: 'Why,
If all won't take, take what is left,' said I.
At this He smiled, and said 'In vain divine
Love's price thou beatest; give nothing and she 's thine.'

Sir Edward Sherburne.

96 HYMN *

WHILST I beheld the neck of the dove,
I spied, and read these words.
This pretty dye,
Which takes your eye,
Is not at all the bird's.
The dusky raven might
Have with these colours pleased your sight,
Had God but chose so to ordain above:
This label wore the dove.

Whilst I admired the nightingale,
These notes she warbled o'er.
No melody
Indeed have I,
Admire me then no more:
God has it in His choice
To give the owl, or me this voice;
'Tis He, 'tis He that makes me tell my tale:
This sang the nightingale.

I smelt and praised the fragrant rose;
Blushing, thus answered she.
The praise you gave,
The scent I have,
Do not belong to me;
This harmless odour, none
But only God indeed does own;
To be His keepers, my poor leaves He chose:
And thus replied the rose.

I took the honey from the bee;
On the bag these words were seen.
More sweet than this
Perchance nought is,
Yet gall it might have been:
If God it should so please,
He could still make it such with ease;
And as well gall to honey change can He:
This learnt I of the bee.

I touched, and liked the down of the swan;
But felt these words there writ.
Bristles, thorns, here
I soon should bear,
Did God ordain but it;
If my down to thy touch
Seem soft and smooth, God made it such;
Give more, or take all this away, He can;
This was I taught by the swan.

All creatures then, confess to God
That they owe Him all, but I.
My senses find
True, what my mind
Would still, oft does, deny.
Hence pride! out of my soul!
O'er it thou shalt no more control;
I'll learn this lesson, and escape the rod:
I too, have all from God.

Patrick Carey.

97 TRIOLET *

YES, my dear Lord, I've found it so,
No joys but Thine are purely sweet;
Other delights come mixed with woe,
Yes, my dear Lord, I've found it so.
Pleasure at courts is but in show,
With true content in cells we meet;
Yes, my dear Lord, I've found it so,
No joys but Thine are purely sweet.

Patrick Carey.

98 ON THE DEATH OF MR. CRASHAW *

POET and Saint! To thee alone are given
The two most sacred names of Earth and Heaven,
The hard and rarest union which can be,
Next that of Godhead with humanity.
Long did the Muses banished slaves abide,
And built vain pyramids to mortal pride;
Like Moses thou (though spells and charms withstand)
Hast brought them nobly home back to their Holy Land.

Ah, wretched we, poets of earth! But thou
Wert living the same poet which thou'rt now.
Whilst angels sing to thee their airs divine,
And joy in an applause so great as thine,

Equal society with them to hold
Thou need'st not make new songs, but say the old;
And they, kind spirits, shall all rejoice to see
How little less than they exalted man may be.

Thy spotless Muse, like Mary, did contain
The boundless Godhead; she did well disdain
That her eternal verse employed should be
On a less subject than eternity;
And for a sacred mistress scorned to take
But her whom God Himself scorned not His spouse to make.
It (in a kind) her miracles did do;
A fruitful mother was, and virgin too.

How well, blest Swan, did Fate contrive thy death,
And made thee render up thy tuneful breath
In thy great mistress' arms, thou most divine
And richest offering of Loretto's shrine;
Where, like some holy sacrifice to expire,
A fever burns thee and love lights the fire.
Angels, they say, brought the famed chapel there,
And bore the sacred load in triumph through the air.
'Tis surer much they brought thee there, and they
And thou their charge went singing all the way.

Abraham Cowley.

99 CHRIST'S PASSION

ENOUGH, my Muse, of earthly things,
And inspirations but of wind;
Take up thy lute, and to it bind
Loud and everlasting strings,
And on them play, and to them sing,
The happy mournful stories,
The lamentable glories
Of the great crucified King!
Mountainous heap of wonders! which dost rise
Till earth thou joinest with the skies!

Too large at bottom, and at top too high,
To be half seen by mortal eye;
How shall I grasp this boundless thing?
What shall I play? what shall I sing?
I'll sing the mighty riddle of mysterious love,
Which neither wretched men below, nor blessed spirits above,
With all their comments can explain,
How all the whole world's Life to die did not disdain!

I'll sing the searchless depths of the compassion divine,
The depths unfathomed yet
By reason's plummet, and the line of wit;
Too light the plummet, and too short the line;
How the eternal Father did bestow
His own eternal Son as ransom for His foe;
I'll sing aloud that all the world may hear
The triumph of the buried Conqueror;
How Hell was by its Prisoner captive led,
And the great slayer, Death, slain by the Dead.

Methinks I hear of murdered men the voice
Mixed with the murderers' confused noise,
Sound from the top of Calvary;
My greedy eyes fly up the hill, and see
Who 'tis hangs there, the midmost of the three;
O! how unlike the others He;
Look! how He bends His gentle head with blessings from the tree!
His gracious hands, ne'er stretched but to do good,
Are nailed to the infamous wood!
And sinful man does fondly bind
The arms which He extends to embrace all human kind.

Abraham Cowley.

100 SONG OF THE EMIGRANTS IN BERMUDA *

WHERE the remote Bermudas ride
In the ocean's bosom unespied,
From a small boat that rowed along
The listening winds received this song:

'What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze
Where He the huge sea-monsters wracks,[1]
That lift the deep upon their backs,
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?
He lands us on a grassy stage,
Safe from the storms, and prelates' rage:
He gave us this eternal Spring
Which here enamels everything,
And sends the fowls to us in care
On daily visits through the air.
He hangs in shades the orange bright
Like golden lamps in a green night,
And does in the pomegranates close
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows:
He makes the figs our mouths to meet,
And throws the melons at our feet;
But apples plants of such a price,
No tree could ever bear them twice.
With cedars chosen by His hand
From Lebanon He stores the land;
And makes the hollow seas that roar
Proclaim the ambergris on shore.
He cast (of which we rather boast)
The Gospel's pearl upon our coast;
And in these rocks for us did frame
A temple where to sound His name.
O let our voice His praise exalt
Till it arrive at Heaven's vault,
Which thence (perhaps) rebounding, may
Echo beyond the Mexique bay!'

[1] wrecks.

Thus sung they in the English boat
A holy and a cheerful note:
And all the way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time.

Andrew Marvell.

101 A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE RESOLVED SOUL AND CREATED PLEASURE

Courage, my soul, now learn to wield
The weight of thine immortal shield;
Close on thy head thy helmet bright,
Balance thy sword against the fight;
See where an army, strong as fair,
With silken banners spread the air!
Now, if thou beest that thing divine,
In this day's combat let it shine;
And show that Nature wants an art
To conquer one resolvèd heart.

Pleasure. Welcome, the creation's guest,
Lord of earth and Heaven's heir!
Lay aside that warlike crest,
And of Nature's banquet share;
Where the souls of fruits and flowers
Stand prepared to heighten yours.

Soul. I sup above, and cannot stay,
To bait so long upon the way.

Pleasure. On these downy pillows lie,
Whose soft plumes will thither fly;
On these roses, strewed so plain
Lest one leaf thy side should strain.

Soul. My gentler rest is on a thought—
Conscious of doing what I ought.

Pleasure. If thou beest with perfumes pleased,
Such as oft the gods appeased,
Thou in fragrant clouds shalt show,
Like another god below.

Soul. A soul that knows not to presume,
Is Heaven's, and its own, perfume.

Pleasure. Every thing does seem to vie
Which should first attract thine eye,
But since none deserves that grace,
In this crystal view thy face.

Soul. When the Creator's skill is prized,
The rest is all but earth disguised.

Pleasure. Hark how music then prepares
For thy stay these charming airs,
Which the posting winds recall,
And suspend the river's fall.

Soul. Had I but any time to lose,
On this I would it all dispose.
Cease tempter! None can chain a mind,
Whom this sweet cordage cannot bind.

CHORUS

Earth cannot show so brave a sight,
As when a single soul does fence
The batteries of alluring sense,
And Heaven views it with delight.
Then persevere; for still new charges sound,
And if thou overcomest thou shalt be crowned.

Pleasure. All that 's costly, fair, and sweet,
Which scatteringly doth shine,
Shall within one beauty meet,
And she be only thine.

Soul. If things of sight such heavens be,
What Heavens are those we cannot see?

Pleasure. Wheresoe'er thy foot shall go
The minted gold shall lie,
Till thou purchase all below,
And want new worlds to buy.

Soul. Wer't not for price who'ld value gold?
And that's worth naught that can be sold.

Pleasure. Wilt thou all the glory have
That war or peace commend?
Half the world shall be thy slave,
The other half thy friend.

Soul. What friends, if to myself untrue?
What slaves, unless I captive you?

Pleasure. Thou shalt know each hidden cause,
And see the future time;
Try what depth the centre draws,
And then to Heaven climb.

Soul. None thither mounts by the degree [1]
Of knowledge, but humility.

CHORUS

Triumph, triumph, victorious soul!
The world has not one pleasure more:
The rest does lie beyond the pole,
And is thine everlasting store.

Andrew Marvell.

102 THE RETREAT *

HAPPY those early days, when I
Shined in my Angel-infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first Love,

[1] stair

And looking back—at that short space—
Could see a glimpse of His bright face:—
When on some gilded cloud, or flower,
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity:—
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence the enlightened spirit sees
That shady City of Palm-trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

Henry Vaughan.

103 THE MORNING-WATCH

O JOYS, infinite sweetness, with what flowers
And shoots of glory my soul breaks and buds!
All the long hours
Of night and rest,
Through the still shrouds
Of sleep, and clouds,
This dew fell on my breast;
O how it floods,
And spirits all my earth! hark! In what rings
And hymning circulations the quick world

Awakes and sings!
The rising winds,
And falling springs,
Birds, beasts, all things
Adore Him in their kinds.
Thus all is hurled
In sacred hymns and order; the great chime
And symphony of Nature. Prayer is
The world in tune,
A spirit-voice,
And vocal joys,
Whose echo is Heaven's bliss.
O let me climb
When I lie down! The pious soul by night
Is like a clouded star, whose beams, though said
To shed their light
Under some cloud,
Yet are above,
And shine and move
Beyond that misty shroud.
So in my bed
That curtained grave, though sleep, like ashes, hide
My lamp and life, both shall in Thee abide.

Henry Vaughan.

104 PEACE

My soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a winged sentry
All skilful in the wars.
There, above noise and danger,
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious Friend,
And (O my soul awake)
Did in pure love descend,
To die here for thy sake.

If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of peace,
The Rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges:
For none can thee secure,
But One, Who never changes,
Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

Henry Vaughan.

105 THEY ARE ALL GONE

THEY are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit lingering here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is dressed,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days;
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope, and high Humility!
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have showed them me
To kindle my cold love.

Dear beauteous Death! the jewel of the just,
Shining nowhere but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust;
Could man out-look that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest, may know
At first sight, if the bird be flown;
But what fair well or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul, when man doth sleep;
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb
Here captive flames must needs burn there;
But when the hand that locked her up, gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee,
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective, still, as they pass;
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,
Where I shall need no glass.

Henry Vaughan.

106 THE DWELLING PLACE

WHAT happy, secret fountain,
What fair shade, or mountain,
Whose undiscovered virgin glory
Boasts it this day, though not in story,
Was then Thy dwelling,[1] did some cloud,
Fixed to a tent, descend and shroud
My distressed Lord? or did a star,
Beckoned by Thee, though high and far,
In sparkling smiles haste gladly down
To lodge Light, and increase her own?

My dear, dear God, I do not know
What lodged Thee then, nor where, nor how;
But I am sure Thou dost now come
Oft to a narrow, homely room
Where Thou too hast but the least part
My God, I mean my sinful heart.

Henry Vaughan.

[1] S. John i. 38–39.

107 THE NIGHT*

THROUGH that pure virgin shrine,
That sacred veil drawn o'er Thy glorious noon,
That men might look and live, as glow-worms shine
And face the moon:
Wise Nicodemus saw such light
As made him know his God by night.

No mercy-seat of gold,
No dead and dusty cherub, nor carved stone,
But His own living works did my Lord hold
And lodge alone;
Where trees and herbs did watch and peep
And wonder, while the Jews did sleep.

Dear Night, this world's defeat;
The stop to busy fools; Care's check and curb;
The day of Spirits; my soul's calm retreat
Which none disturb!
Christ's progress, and His prayer time;
The hours to which high Heaven doth chime.

God's silent, searching flight,
When my Lord's head is filled with dews, and all
His locks are wet with the clear drops of night;
His still soft call;
His knocking-time; the soul's dumb watch,
When spirits their fair kindred catch.

Were all my loud, evil days
Calm and unhaunted as is thy dark tent,
Whose peace, but by some angel's wing or voice,
Is seldom rent
Then I in Heaven all the long year
Would keep, and never wander here.

But living where the sun
Doth all things wake, and where all mix and tire
Themselves and others, I consent and run
To every mire;
And by this world's ill-guiding light
Err more than I can do by night.

There is in God—some say—
A deep, but dazzling darkness; as men here
Say it is late and dusky, because they
See not all clear.
O for that Night where I in Him
Might live invisible and dim!

Henry Vaughan.

108 ANGUISH

My God and King, to Thee
I bow my knee;
I bow my troubled soul, and greet
With my foul heart Thy holy feet.
Cast it, or tread it; it shall do
Even what Thou wilt, and praise Thee too.

My God, could I weep blood,
Gladly I would;
Or if Thou wilt give me that art,
Which through the eyes pours out the heart,
I will exhaust it all, and make
Myself all tears, a weeping lake.

O 'tis an easy thing
To write and sing;
But to write true, unfeignèd verse
Is very hard. O God, disperse
These weights, and give my spirit leave
To act as well as to conceive.

O my God, hear my cry;
Or let me die!

Henry Vaughan.

109 TEARS

O WHEN my God, my Glory, brings
His white and holy train
Unto those clear and living springs
Where comes no stain.

Where all is light, and flowers, and fruit,
And joy, and rest,
Make me amongst them—'tis my suit—
The last one, and the least.

And when they all are fed, and have
Drunk of Thy living stream,
Bid Thy poor ass—with tears I crave—
Drink after them.

Thy love claims highest thanks, my sin
The lowest pitch:
But if he pays, who loves much, then
Thou hast made beggars rich.

Henry Vaughan.

110 THE WATERFALL

WITH what deep murmurs, through Time's silent stealth,
Doth thy transparent, cool, and watery wealth
Here flowing fall,
And chide and call,
As if his liquid, loose retinue stayed
Lingering, and were of this steep place afraid;
The common pass,
As clear as glass,
All must descend
Not to an end,
But quickened by this deep and rocky grave,
Rise to a longer course, more bright and brave.

Dear stream! dear bank! where often I
Have sate, and pleased my pensive eye;
Why, since each drop of thy quick store
Runs thither where it flowed before,
Should poor souls fear a shade or night,
Who came—sure—from a sea of light?
Or, since those drops are all sent back
So sure to thee that none doth lack,
Why should frail flesh doubt any more
That what God takes He'll not restore?

O useful element and clear!
My sacred wash and cleanser here;
My first consigner[1] unto those
Fountains of life, where the Lamb goes;
What sublime truths and wholesome themes
Lodge in thy mystical, deep streams!
Such as dull man can never find,
Unless that Spirit lead his mind,
Which first upon thy face did move
And hatched all with His quickening love.
As this loud brook's incessant fall
In streaming rings restagnates all,
Which reach by course the bank, and then
Are no more seen: just so pass men.
—O my invisible estate,
My glorious liberty, still late!
Thou art the channel my soul seeks,
Not this with cataracts and creeks.

Henry Vaughan.

111 THE ASCENSION *

A DITHYRAMB

SEE how the joyous clouds make way
And put a ruddy brightness on,
How they their silken fleeces lay
For Him to mount to Heaven upon,
Where He may in full glory shine,
Whose presence made before a Heaven of Palestine.

That lovely Brow, that was before
Drowned in a flood of crimson sweat,
Is now with brightness gilded o'er,
And all with burnished flames beset.
Him, whom His drowsy sons did leave
Sleepless, aerial legions triumph to receive.

[1] i.e. in Baptism.

Why stand you, curious gazers, so?
No eye can reach His journey's end;
He'll pierce the rolling concave through,
And that expanded fabric rend;
Then He 's at home: He was before
A pilgrim, while He footed this round nothing o'er.

Hark! hark! what melody, what choice
Of sweetest airs, of charming sounds!
Heaven seems all turned into a voice!
Hear what loud shrieking joy rebounds!
The very winds now whistle joy,
And make Hosannas of the former Crucify!

John Hall.

112 A PASTORAL HYMN

HAPPY choristers of air,
Who by your nimble flight draw near
His throne, whose wondrous story
And unconfinèd glory
Your notes still carol, whom your sound
And whom your plumy notes rebound.

Yet do the lazy snails no less
The greatness of our Lord confess,
And those whom weight hath chained,
And to the earth restrained,
Their ruder voices do as well,
Yea, and the speechless fishes tell.

Great Lord, from whom each tree receives,
Then pays again as rent, his leaves;
Thou dost in purple set
The rose and violet,
And givest the sickly lily white;
Yet in them all Thy name dost write.

John Hall.

113 THE VALIANT PILGRIM

WHO would true valour see,
Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather;
There 's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim.

Whoso beset him round
With dismal stories
Do but themselves confound;
His strength the more is.
No lion can him fright,
He'll with a giant fight,
But he will have a right
To be a pilgrim.

Hobgoblin nor foul fiend
Can daunt his spirit;
He knows he at the end
Shall life inherit.
Then fancies fly away,
He'll fear not what men say;
He'll labour night and day
To be a pilgrim.

John Bunyan.

114 WONDER *

How like an angel came I down!
How bright are all things here!
When first among His works I did appear
O how their glory me did crown!
The world resembled His Eternity,
In which my soul did walk
And everything that I did see
Did with me talk.

The skies in their magnificence,
The lively lovely air;
O how divine, how soft, how sweet, how fair!
The stars did entertain my sense,
And all the works of God, so bright and pure,
So rich and great did seem,
As if they ever must endure
In my esteem.

A native health and innocence
Within my bones did grow,
And while my God did all His glories show
I felt a vigour in my sense
That was all spirit. I within did flow
With seas of life like wine;
I nothing in the world did know
But 'twas divine.

Harsh ragged objects were concealed,
Oppressions, tears, and cries,
Sins, griefs, complaints, dissensions, weeping eyes
Were hid, and only things revealed
Which heavenly spirits and the angels prize.
The state of innocence
And bliss, not trades and poverties,
Did fill my sense.

The streets were paved with golden stones,
The boys and girls were mine.
O how did all their lovely faces shine!
The sons of men were holy ones,
In joy and beauty they appeared to me,
And everything which here I found,
While like an angel I did see,
Adorned the ground

Rich diamond and pearl and gold
In every place was seen;
Rare splendours, yellow, blue, red, white, and green,
Mine eyes did everywhere behold.

Great wonders clothed with glory did appear,
Amazement was my bliss;
That and my wealth was everywhere;
No joy to[1] this!

Cursed and devised proprieties,[2]
With envy, avarice,
And fraud, those fiends that spoil even Paradise,
Flew from the splendour of mine eyes;
And so did hedges, ditches, limits, bounds;
I dreamed not aught of those,
But wandered over all men's grounds,
And found repose.

Proprieties[2] themselves were mine,
And hedges ornaments;
Walls, boxes, coffers, and their rich contents
Did not divide my joys, but all combine.
Clothes, ribbons, jewels, laces I esteemed
My joys by others worn;
For me they all to wear them seemed,
When I was born.

Thomas Traherne.

115 THE WAYS OF WISDOM *

THESE sweeter far than lilies are;
No roses may with these compare;
How these excel,
No tongue can tell,
Which he that well and truly knows,
With joy and praise he goes.
How great and happy 's he that knows his ways
To be divine and heavenly joys:—
To whom each city is more brave
Than walls of pearl, and streets which gold doth pave:
Whose open eyes
Behold the skies;

[1] compared to. [2] properties.

Who loves their wealth and beauty more
Than kings love golden ore.
Who sees the heavenly ancient ways
Of God, the Lord, with joy and praise,
More than the skies
With open eyes
Doth prize them all; yea, more than gems,
And regal diadems;
That more esteemeth mountains, as they are,
Than if they gold and silver were:
To whom the sun more pleasure brings
Than crowns and thrones and palaces to kings;
That knows his ways
To be the joys
And way of God—these things who knows
With joy and praise he goes.

Thomas Traherne.

116 IMMENSITY *

LORD, for Thy votaries Thou hast wings decreed,
To mount with eagles' speed;
But eagles fly too slow, I fear,
For my long passage o'er the sphere;
Resolved I am to try
The sphere of God's all-seeing eye.

To Heaven I mounted, searched the mansions round,
And rays divine in every mansion found;
No saint is there
But in God's blissful Presence has a share;
Then down to deepest Hell I steer,
Sure, God, I said, cannot be here,
They in despair and torment lie,
And God defy;
Yet God was e'en in lowest Hell
To awe the fiends who would rebel.

Then to the ocean I my flight direct,
But while the ocean I inspect,
As the vast fluid rolls,
God every wave controls;
When saints to Him in tempest cry
He still is nigh.

I next passed through the subterraneous pores,
Where Nature her hid treasure stores;
There I great God behold
For trials giving or restraining gold;
I entered all earth's lonely caves,
I traversed all the land of graves;
God there keeps strict account of human dust,
And can each atom to its site adjust.

In horrid night,
When moon and stars withheld their light,
I tried myself to shroud
Within the thickest cloud;
'Twas darkness which I could like Egypt feel,
No darkness yet could me from God conceal;
But by His omnipresent ray
He thickest darkness turned into meridian day.

Out of this globe I then God's Presence trace,
Through all imaginable space;
Before He on the world His power employed,
His all-sufficient self He there enjoyed;
And should He all the sandy grains,
The universe contains,
Turn to new worlds as spacious as the old,
In all those worlds He would His face unfold;
Should His almighty power
Create new worlds each hour;
No numbers His own essence can divide;
God never can be multiplied;
His single eye
Into unnumbered worlds coevally can pry.

Thomas Ken.

117 DAYS NUMBERED

GOD a command upon me lays
Rightly to number all my days,
Of all, past, present and to come,
To cast the sum.

That gracious God may be obeyed
I call arithmetic to aid,
The sum to which they all amount
I strive to count.

But soon as I begin to cast
The number of my days now past,
All look like an evanid[1] dream,
All cyphers seem.

My *now* when I minutely weigh,
'Tis but a moment, not a day,
My future is to all unknown,
But God alone.

I then arithmetic suspect,
And on the past again reflect,
To number not my days but sins,
My soul begins.

My sins to such vast numbers swell,
Which no arithmetic can tell;
Their multitude, which has no bounds,
My soul confounds.

My cyphers I to figures change,
And in a total fain would range;
But when I re-survey the score,
I still find more.

Lord, in Thy book they are enrolled,
O might I there the sum behold,
That I the debt immense may know
Which there I owe.

[1] fleeting.

The blood of dying God alone
Can for my vast arrears atone;
His merits far my sins exceed,
Them, Lord, I plead.

Thomas Ken.

118 HYMN FOR THE MORNING *

AWAKE, my soul, awake, mine eyes,
Awake my drowsy faculties;
Awake, and see the new-born light
Spring from the darksome womb of night.
Look up and see the unwearied sun
Already hath his race begun:
The pretty lark is mounted high,
And sings her matins in the sky.
Arise my soul, and thou, my voice,
In songs of praise early rejoice.
O great Creator, Heavenly King,
Thy praises let me ever sing.
Thy power has made, Thy goodness kept
This fenceless body while I slept;
Yet one day more hast given me,
From all the powers of darkness free:
O keep my heart from sin secure,
My life unblameable and pure,
That when the last of all my days is come
Cheerful and fearless I may wait my doom.

Thomas Flatman.

119 ANTHEM FOR THE EVENING

SLEEP, downy sleep, come close my eyes,
Tired with beholding vanities.
Sweet slumbers come, and chase away
The toils and follies of the day:

On your soft bosom will I lie,
Forget the world, and learn to die.
O Israel's watchful Shepherd, spread
Tents of angels round my bed;
Let not the spirits of the air,
While I slumber, me ensnare;
But save Thy suppliant free from harms,
Clasped in Thine everlasting Arms.
Clouds and thick darkness is Thy Throne,
Thy wonderful pavilion:
Oh dart from thence a shining ray,
And then my midnight shall be day.
Thus when the morn in crimson drest
Breaks through the windows of the East,
My hymns of thankful praises shall arise
Like incense or the morning sacrifice.

Thomas Flatman.

120 THE INVITATION *

LORD, what unvalued pleasures crowned
The days of old;
When Thou wert so familiar found,
Those days were gold;—

When Abram wished Thou couldst afford
With him to feast;
When Lot but said, 'Turn in, my Lord,'
Thou wert his guest.

But, ah! this heart of mine doth pant,
And beat for Thee;
Yet Thou art strange, and wilt not grant
Thyself to me.

What! shall Thy people be so dear
To Thee no more?
Or is not Heaven to Earth as near
As heretofore?

The famished raven's hoarser cry
Finds out Thine ear;
My soul is famished, and I die
Unless Thou hear.

O Thou great Alpha! King of kings!
Or bow to me,
Or lend my soul seraphic wings,
To get to Thee.

Anon.

121 PEACE *

I SOUGHT for Peace, but could not find,
I sought it in the city;
But they were of another mind,
The more 's the pity.

I sought for Peace of country swain,
But yet I could not find;
So I, returning home again,
Left Peace behind.

'Sweet Peace, where dost thou dwell?' said I
Methought a voice was given;
'Peace dwelt not here, long since did fly
To God in Heaven.'

Thought I, this echo is but vain,
To folly 'tis of kin;
Anon, I heard it tell me plain,
'Twas killed by sin.

Then I believed the former voice,
And rested well content;
Laid down and slept, rose, did rejoice,
And then to Heaven went.

There I enquired for Peace, and found it true,
An heavenly plant it was, and sweetly grew.

Anon.

122 PREPARATIONS *

YET if His Majesty, our sovereign lord,
Should of his own accord
Friendly himself invite,
And say, 'I'll be your guest to-morrow night,'
How should we stir ourselves, call and command
All hands to work! 'Let no man idle stand!

'Set me fine Spanish tables in the hall,
See they be fitted all;
Let there be room to eat
And order taken that there want no meat.
See every sconce and candlestick made bright,
That without tapers they may give a light.

'Look to the presence: are the carpets spread,
The dazie[1] o'er the head,
The cushions in the chairs,
And all the candles lighted on the stairs?
Perfume the chambers, and in any case
Let each man give attendance in his place.'

Thus, if the king were coming, would we do;
And 'twere good reason too;
For 'tis a duteous thing
To show all honour to an earthly king,
And after all our travail and our cost,
So he be pleased, to think no labour lost.

But at the coming of the King of Heaven
All 's set at six and seven;
We wallow in our sin,
Christ cannot find a chamber in the inn.
We entertain Him always like a stranger,
And, as at first, still lodge Him in the manger.

Anon.

[1] canopy.

123 HYMN TO DARKNESS*

HAIL, thou most sacred venerable thing!
What Muse is worthy thee to sing?
Thee, from whose pregnant universal womb,
All things, even Light thy rival, first did come.
What dares he not attempt that sings of thee
Thou first and greatest mystery?
Who can the secrets of thy essence tell?
Thou like the light of God art inaccessible.

Before great Love this monument did raise,
This ample theatre of praise;
Before the folding circles of the sky
Were tuned by Him Who is all harmony;
Before the morning stars their hymn began,
The counsel held for man;
Before the birth of either Time or Place,
Thou reign'st unquestioned monarch in the empty space.

Thy native lot thou didst to Light resign,
But still half of the globe is thine.
Here with a quiet and yet aweful hand,
Like the best emperors thou dost command.
To thee the stars above their brightness owe,
And mortals their repose below.
To thy protection Fear and Sorrow flee,
And those that weary are of light find rest in thee.

Though light and glory be the Almighty's throne,
Darkness is His pavilion.
From that His radiant beauty, but from thee
He has His terror and His majesty.
Thus when He first proclaimed His sacred Law,
And would His rebel subjects awe,
Like princes on some great solemnity
He appeared in 's robes of state and clad Himself with thee.

John Norris.

124 THE PROSPECT

WHAT a strange moment will that be,
My soul, how full of curiosity
When winged, and ready for thy eternal flight
On the utmost edges of thy tottering clay,
Hovering and wishing longer stay,
Thou shalt advance, and have eternity in sight;
When just about to try that unknown sea,
What a strange moment will that be!

But yet how much more strange that state
When, loosened from the embrace of this close mate
Thou shalt at once be plunged in liberty,
And move as free and active as a ray
Shot from the lucid spring of day!
Thou who just now wast clogged with dull mortality,
How wilt thou bear the mighty change, how know
Whether thou'rt then the same or no!

Then to strange mansions of the air
And stranger company must thou repair!
What a new scene of things will then appear!
The world thou by degrees wast taught to know,
Which lessened thy surprise below;
But knowledge all at once will overflow thee there.
That world, as the first man did this, thou'lt see,
Ripe grown, in full maturity.

There with bright splendours must thou dwell,
And be—what only those pure forms can tell.
There must thou live awhile, gaze and admire,
Till the great angel's trump this fabric shake,
And all the slumbering dead awake,
Then to thy old, forgotten state thou must retire.
This union then will seem as strange, or more,
Than thy new liberty before.

Now for the greatest change prepare,
To see the only Great, the only Fair,
  Veil now thy feeble eyes, gaze and be blest;
Here all thy turns and revolutions cease,
Here 's all serenity and peace:
  Thou'rt to the centre come, the native seat of rest.
There 's now no further change nor need there be;
When one shall be variety.

John Norris.

125 A SONG OF PRAISE *

THOU wast, O God: and Thou wast blest
  Before the world begun;
Of Thine Eternity possest
  Before Time's glass did run.
Thou needest none Thy praise to sing,
  As if Thy joy could fade.
Could'st Thou have needed anything,
  Thou could'st have nothing made.

To whom, Lord, should I sing but Thee,
  The Maker of my tongue?
Lo! other lords would seize on me,
  But I to Thee belong:
As waters haste unto their sea,
  And earth unto its earth,
So let my soul return to Thee
  From whom it had its birth.

But ah! I'm fallen in the night,
  And cannot come to Thee;
Yet speak the word, *Let there be Light*,
  It shall enlighten me:
And let Thy word, most mighty Lord,
  Thy fallen creature raise,
So make me o'er again, and I
  Shall sing my Maker's praise.

John Mason.

126 COMMUNION WITH GOD *

ALAS, my God, that we should be
Such strangers to each other!
O that as friends we might agree,
And walk and talk together!

May I taste that communion, Lord,
Thy people have with Thee!
Thy Spirit daily talks with them,
O let It talk with me!

Like Enoch, let me walk with God,
And thus walk out my day,
Attended with the Heavenly guards,
Upon the King's highway.

When wilt Thou come unto me, Lord?
O come, my Lord most dear!
Come near, come nearer, nearer still:
I'm well when Thou art near.

There 's no such thing as pleasure here;
My Jesus is my all:
As Thou dost shine or disappear,
My pleasures rise and fall.

When wilt Thou come unto me, Lord?
For, till Thou dost appear,
I count each moment for a day,
Each minute for a year.

Thomas Shepherd.

127 DEPARTURE

I HAD a Lord, but Ah, He 's gone,
And left my troubled soul alone;
Him I pursue with begging eyes,
Alas, He disregards my cries.

I bid my sighs my griefs declare,
He counts my sighs for empty air;
So, like a withered flower I mourn,
Nor can look up till He return.

Sure, sin 's the cause; but though it be,
Thou pitiest sinners, pity me;
Lord, I have read Thy Blood was spilt
To wash away the sinner's guilt.

If every sin was guilt of blood
And I marked out for vengeance stood
I'd run and to the Saviour kneel
The Saviour knows what sinners feel.

Thomas Shepherd.

128 FOR UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE

LORD, Thou hast planted me a vine
In fertile soil and air;
Now tend and water me as Thine,
Make me Thy daily care.

Shall Simon bear Thy Cross alone,
And other saints be free?
Each saint of Thine shall find his own
And there is one for me:

Whene'er it falls unto my lot,
Let it not drive me from
My God; let me ne'er be forgot
Till Thou hast loved me home.

O happy Christians be not loth
To have a coarser fare;
Saints that have had no table-cloth
Had Christ at dinner there.

Thomas Shepherd.

129 AN ODE*

THE spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled Heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
The unwearied Sun from day to day
Does his Creator's power display;
And publishes, to every land,
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous tale;
And nightly, to the listening Earth,
Repeats the story of her birth:
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball;
What though nor real voice, nor sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found;
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
For ever singing as they shine:
'The Hand that made us is divine.'

Joseph Addison.

130 THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT*

AN ODE

ATTEMPTED IN ENGLISH SAPPHIC

WHEN the fierce North-wind with his airy forces
Rears up the Baltic to a foaming fury,
And the red lightning with a storm of hail comes
Rushing amain down,

How the poor sailors stand amazed and tremble,
While the hoarse thunder, like a bloody trumpet,
Roars a loud onset to the gaping waters
Quick to devour them.

Such shall the noise be, and the wild disorder,
(If things eternal may be like these earthly)
Such the dire terror when the great archangel
Shakes the creation;

Tears the strong pillars of the vault of Heaven,
Breaks up old marble, the repose of princes,
Sees the graves open, and the bones arising,
Flames all around them.

Hark, the shrill outcries of the guilty wretches!
Lively bright horror and amazing anguish
Stare through their eyelids, while the living worm lies
Gnawing within them.

Thoughts, like old vultures, prey upon their heart-strings,
And the smart twinges, when the eye beholds the
Lofty Judge frowning, and a flood of vengeance
Rolling afore Him.

Hopeless immortals! how they scream and shiver,
While devils push them to the pit wide-yawning
Hideous and gloomy, to receive them headlong
Down to the centre!

Stop here my fancy: (all away, ye horrid
Doleful ideas!) come, arise to Jesus,
How He sits God-like! and the saints around Him
Throned yet adoring!

O may I sit there when He comes triumphant,
Dooming the nations! then ascend to glory,
While our Hosannas all along the passage
Shout the Redeemer.

Isaac Watts.

131 THE SONG OF ANGELS ABOVE

EARTH has detained me prisoner long,
And I'm grown weary now;
My heart, my hand, my ear, my tongue,
There 's nothing here for you.

Tired in my thoughts I stretch me down,
And upward glance mine eyes;
Upward, my Father, to Thy throne,
And to my native skies.

There the dear Man, my Saviour, sits,
The God how bright He shines!
He scatters infinite delights
On all the happy minds.

Jesus the Lord their harps employs,
Jesus my Love they sing,
Jesus, the name of both our joys,
Sounds sweet from every string.

Hark, how beyond the narrow bounds
Of time and space they run,
And speak in most majestic sounds
The Godhead of the Son!

How on the Father's breast He lay,
The darling of His soul,
Infinite years before the day
Or heavens began to roll.

And now they sink the lofty tone
And gentler notes they play,
And bring the eternal Godhead down
To dwell in humbler clay.

O sacred beauties of the Man!
(The God resides within)
His flesh all pure without a stain
His soul without a sin.

Thus, while with unambitious strife
The ethereal minstrels rove
Through all the labours of His life
And wonders of His love,

In the full choir a broken string
Groans with a strange surprise;
The rest in silence mourn their King,
That bleeds, and loves, and dies.

Seraph and saint with drooping wings
Cease their harmonious breath,
No blooming trees, nor bubbling springs,
While Jesus sleeps in death.

Then all at once to living strains
They summon every chord,
Break up the tomb, and burst His chains,
And show their living Lord.

Around the flaming army throngs
To guard Him to the skies,
With loud Hosannahs on their tongues,
And triumph in their eyes.

In awful state the conquering God
Ascends His shining Throne,
While tuneful angels sound abroad
The victories He has won.

Now let me rise and join their song,
And be an angel too;
My heart, my hand, my ear, my tongue,
Here 's joyful work for you.

I would begin the music here,
And so my soul should rise:
O for some heavenly notes to bear
My spirit to the skies!

I am confined to earth no more,
But mount in haste above,
To bless the God that I adore,
And sing the Man I love.

Isaac Watts.

132 A CRADLE HYMN

HUSH! my dear, lie still and slumber,
Holy angels guard thy bed!
Heavenly blessings without number
Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe; thy food and raiment,
House and home, thy friends provide;
All without thy care or payment,
All thy wants are well supplied.

How much better thou'rt attended
Than the Son of God could be,
When from Heaven He descended
And became a child like thee!

Soft and easy is thy cradle;
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay;
When His birth-place was a stable,
And His softest bed was hay.

See the kinder shepherds round Him,
Telling wonders from the sky!
Where they sought Him, there they found Him,
With His Virgin Mother by.

Lo, He slumbers in His manger,
Where the hornèd oxen fed;
Peace, my darling, here 's no danger,
Here 's no ox a-near thy bed.

May'st thou live to know and fear Him,
Trust and love Him all thy days;
Then go dwell for ever near Him,
See His face and sing His praise!

Isaac Watts.

133 THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL

VITAL spark of heavenly flame,
Quit, O quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying.
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper. Angels say:—
'Sister Spirit, come away!'
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirit, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave, where is thy victory?
O Death, where is thy sting?

Alexander Pope.

134 THE DESPONDING SOUL'S WISH:* DESIDERIUM

MY spirit longeth for Thee,
Within my troubled breast,
Although I be unworthy
Of so divine a Guest.

Of so divine a Guest,
Unworthy though I be,
Yet has my heart no rest,
Unless it come from Thee.

Unless it come from Thee,
In vain I look around;
In all that I can see,
No rest is to be found.

No rest is to be found,
But in Thy blessed love;
O let my wish be crowned,
And send it from above.

John Byrom.

135 THE ANSWER

CHEER up, desponding soul,
Thy longing, pleased, I see;
'Tis part of that great whole
Wherewith I longed for thee.

Wherewith I longed for thee,
And left My Father's throne;
From death to set thee free,
To claim thee for My own.

To claim thee for My own
I suffered on the cross:
O were My love but known,
No soul could fear its loss.

No soul could fear its loss,
But, filled with love divine,
Would die on its own cross,
And rise for ever Mine.

John Byrom.

136 EPIGRAM

LET thy repentance be without delay—
If thou defer it to another day,
Thou must repent for a day more of sin,
While a day less remains to do it in.

John Byrom.

137 AN EPITAPH *

A CLERGYMAN his labour ends,
And weary sleeps at rest below;
Who, though his fortune found not friends,
In person hardly knew a foe.

Minding no business but his own,
For party never loud to strive;
His flock not only mourn him gone,
But even loved him when alive.

A conscience clean his forehead cheered,
Unsoured by poverty was he;
And always praised, though not preferred,
By every prelate in the see.

But good men view with small regard
The treatment here on earth they find;
Secure in Heaven to meet reward
From the great Bishop of mankind.

Samuel Wesley.

138 THE GREAT WORLD *

MAN is miscalled a little world
By such as estimate
The magnitude of every thing
By measure or by weight.

But Man is constituted lord
Of this inferior Earth,
And moves a greater world, in right
Of his transcendent birth.

The air, the Earth, the glorious sun,
The wide-extended sea
Supply his wants, to his delights
An humble homage pay.

Nay, of this present world he rules,
He reaps as he hath sown,
And (such its plastic nature) forms
A new world of his own.

Where'er he goes he grandeur gives
To every object near;
While distant mountains sink to hills,
Or but as clouds appear.

On whatsoe'er around he looks,
As it approaches nigh,
The ambitious object larger grows,
And swells to meet his eye,

But shrinks in bulk, in colour fades,
If at a distance placed
From him whose presence gave it size,
As banished and disgraced.

Man's, then, a greater world than this,
Whereof he 's lord and head,
This orb created for his use,
And humbled to his tread.

Not only this inferior world
In vassalage is given,
But to his utmost wish proposed
Reversions high in Heaven.

Is not, then, Man a mighty world,
Of more than matter made,
A reasoning world, that is to shine
When sun and moon shall fade?

Through ample space this mental world
Surveys the realm above,
Where God by still more glorious works
His wonder prompts and love.

How great a being then is Man,
If only thus surveyed;
But how do sin and folly join,
This being to degrade!

Nay, how he often brags of vice,
And boasts himself the tool
Of sins he never durst commit!
The despicable fool!

What glory can pretended vice
To such a wretch transmit,
Who claims the honour to be deemed
The devil's hypocrite?

How does Man upward sometimes rise!
How downward thrown again!
How herds he now among the swine!
How ranks he now with men!

To him thus driven up and down,
And this and that way hurled,
His Saviour comes to lift him high
O'er this fallacious world.

Philip Skelton.

139 FREE GRACE*

AND can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

'Tis mystery all: the Immortal dies!
Who can explore His strange design?
In vain the first-born seraph tries
To sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! let earth adore;
Let angel-minds inquire no more.

He left His Father's throne above,
(So free, so infinite His grace!)
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race:
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For, O my God, it found out me!

Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night:
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
I woke; the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

Charles Wesley.

140 WRESTLING JACOB

COME, O Thou Traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see,
My company before is gone,
And I alone am left with Thee;
With Thee all night I mean to stay
And wrestle till the break of day.

I need not tell Thee who I am,
My misery or sin declare;
Thyself hast called me by my name;
Look on Thy hands, and read it there!
But Who, I ask Thee, Who art Thou?
Tell me Thy Name, and tell me now.

In vain Thou strugglest to get free,
I never will unloose my hold;
Art Thou the Man Who died for me?
The secret of Thy love unfold.
Wrestling, I will not let Thee go
Till I Thy Name, Thy Nature know.

Wilt Thou not yet to me reveal
Thy new, unutterable Name?
Tell me, I still beseech Thee, tell:
To know it now, resolved I am:
Wrestling, I will not let Thee go,
Till I Thy Name, Thy Nature know.

'Tis all in vain to hold Thy tongue,
Or touch the hollow of my thigh;
Though every sinew be unstrung,
Out of my arms Thou shalt not fly;
Wrestling I will not let Thee go,
Till I Thy Name, Thy Nature know.

What though my shrinking flesh complain,
And murmur to contend so long?
I rise superior to my pain;
When I am weak, then I am strong.
And when my all of strength shall fail,
I shall with the God-Man prevail.

My strength is gone, my nature dies,
I sink beneath Thy weighty hand;
Faint to revive, and fall to rise;
I fall, and yet by faith I stand:
I stand, and will not let Thee go,
Till I Thy Name, Thy Nature know.

Yield to me now, for I am weak,
But confident in self-despair;
Speak to my heart, in blessings speak,
Be conquered by my instant prayer!
Speak, or Thou never hence shalt move,—
And tell me, if Thy Name is Love?

—'Tis Love! 'tis Love! Thou diedst for me!
I hear Thy whisper in my heart!
The morning breaks, the shadows flee;
Pure universal Love Thou art!
To me, to all, Thy bowels move;
Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love!

My prayer hath power with God; the grace
Unspeakable I now receive;
Through faith I see Thee face to face,
I see Thee face to face, and live:
In vain I have not wept and strove;
Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.

I know Thee, Saviour, who Thou art;
Jesus, the feeble sinner's Friend!
Nor wilt Thou with the night depart,
But stay, and love me to the end.
Thy mercies never shall remove,
Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.

The Sun of Righteousness on me
Hath rose, with healing in His wings;
Withered my nature's strength, from Thee
My soul its life and succour brings;
My help is all laid up above;
Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.

Contented now, upon my thigh
I halt, till life's short journey end;
All helplessness, all weakness, I
On Thee alone for strength depend;
Nor have I power from Thee to move;
Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.

Lame as I am, I take the prey,
Hell, earth, and sin, with ease o'ercome;
I leap for joy, pursue my way,
And as a bounding hart fly home—
Through all eternity to prove,
Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love!

Charles Wesley.

141 TIMES WITHOUT NUMBER

TIMES without number have I prayed,
'This only once forgive';
Relapsing, when Thy hand was stayed,
And suffered me to live:—

Yet now the kingdom of Thy peace,
Lord, to my heart restore;
Forgive my vain repentances,
And bid me sin no more.

Charles Wesley.

142 A SONG TO DAVID *

He sang of God—the mighty source
Of all things—the stupendous force
On which all strength depends;
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes
All period, power, and enterprise
Commences, reigns, and ends.

The world,—the clustering spheres, He made,
The glorious light, the soothing shade,
Dale, champaign, grove, and hill;
The multitudinous abyss,
Where Secrecy remains in bliss,
And Wisdom hides her skill.

The pillars of the Lord are seven,
Which stand from earth to topmost heaven
His Wisdom drew the plan;
His Word accomplished the design,
From brightest gem to deepest mine;
From Christ enthroned, to Man.

O David, scholar of the Lord!
Such is thy science, whence reward,
And infinite degree;
O strength, O sweetness, lasting ripe!
God's harp thy symbol, and thy type
The lion and the bee!

There is but One who ne'er rebelled,
But One by passion unimpelled,
By pleasures unenticed;
He from himself hath semblance sent,
Grand object of his own content,
And saw the God in Christ.

Tell them, I AM, Jehovah said
To Moses; while earth heard in dread,
And, smitten to the heart,
At once above, beneath, around,
All Nature, without voice or sound,
Replied, O Lord, THOU ART.

Praise above all—for praise prevails;
Heap up the measure, load the scales,
And good to goodness add:
The generous soul her Saviour aids,
But peevish obloquy degrades;
The Lord is great and glad.

For Adoration all the ranks
Of Angels yield eternal thanks,
And David in the midst;
With God's good poor, which, last and least
In man's esteem, Thou to Thy feast,
O blessed Bridegroom, bid'st!

Rich almonds colour to the prime
For Adoration; tendrils climb,
And fruit-trees pledge their gems;
And Ivis, with her gorgeous vest,
Builds for her eggs her cunning nest,
And bell-flowers bow their stems.

The laurels with the winter strive;
The crocus burnishes alive
Upon the snow-clad earth;
For Adoration myrtles stay
To keep the garden from dismay,
And bless the sight from dearth.

For Adoration, David's Psalms
Life up the heart to deeds of alms;
And he who kneels and chants,
Prevails his passions to control,
Finds meat and medicine to the soul,
Which for translation pants.

For Adoration, in the skies,
The Lord's philosopher espies
The dog, the ram, and rose;
The planet's ring, Orion's sword;
Nor is his greatness less adored
In the vile worm that glows.

For Adoration, in the dome
Of Christ, the sparrows find a home;
And on His olives perch:
The swallow also dwells with thee,
O man of God's humility,
Within his Saviour's Church.

Sweet is the dew that falls betimes,
And drops upon the leafy limes;
Sweet, Hermon's fragrant air;
Sweet is the lily's silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful tapers' smell
That watch for early prayer.

Strong is the horse upon his speed;
Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,[1]
Which makes at once his game:
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;
Strong through the turbulent profound
Shoots Xiphias[2] to his aim.

Strong is the lion—like a coal
His eyeball,—like a bastion's mole
His chest against the foes:
Strong the gier-eagle[3] on his sail;
Strong against tide the enormous whale
Emerges as he goes.

But stronger still, in earth and air,
And in the sea, the man of prayer,
And far beneath the tide:
And in the seat to faith assigned,
Where ask is have, where seek is find,
Where knock is open wide.

Beauteous the moon full on the lawn
And beauteous when the veil's withdrawn,
The virgin to her spouse;
Beauteous the temple, decked and filled,
When to the Heaven of Heavens they build
Their heart-directed vows.

[1] hawk. [2] the sword fish. [3] vulture.

Beauteous, yea beauteous more than these,
The Shepherd King upon his knees,
For his momentous trust;
With wish of infinite conceit,
For man, beast, mute, the small and great,
And prostrate dust to dust.

Precious the penitential tear;
And precious is the sigh sincere,
Acceptable to God:
And precious are the winning flowers,
In gladsome Israel's feast of bowers
Bound on the hallowed sod.

More precious that diviner part
Of David, even the Lord's own heart,
Great, beautiful, and new;
In all things where it was intent,
In all extremes, in each event,
Proof—answering true to true.

Glorious the sun in mid career;
Glorious the assembled fires appear;
Glorious the comet's train:
Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
Glorious the Almighty's stretched-out arm;
Glorious the enraptured main:

Glorious the northern lights a-stream;
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;
Glorious the thunder's roar:
Glorious Hosannah from the den;
Glorious the catholic Amen;
Glorious the martyr's gore:

Glorious,—more glorious,—is the crown
Of Him that brought salvation down,
By meekness called Thy Son;
Thou that stupendous truth believed;—
And now the matchless deed's achieved,
Determined, Dared, and Done.

Christopher Smart.

143 LOOKING AT THE CROSS *

In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,
And stopped my wild career:
I saw One hanging on a Tree
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed His languid eyes on me,
As near His Cross I stood.

Sure never till my latest breath
Can I forget that look:
It seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke:
My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His Blood had spilt,
And helped to nail Him there.

Alas! I knew not what I did!
But now my tears are vain:
Where shall my trembling soul be hid?
For I the Lord have slain!
A second look He gave, which said,
'I freely all forgive;
This Blood is for thy ransom paid;
I die, that thou mayst live.'

Thus, while His death my sin displays
In all its blackest hue,
Such is the mystery of grace,
It seals my pardon too.
With pleasing grief, and mournful joy,
My spirit now is filled,
That I should such a life destroy,
Yet live by Him I killed!

John Newton.

144 WISDOM *

'ERE God had built the mountains,
Or raised the fruitful hills,
Before He filled the fountains
That feed the running rills;
In me, from everlasting,
The wonderful I AM
Found pleasure never-wasting,
And Wisdom is my name.

'When, like a tent to dwell in,
He spread the skies abroad,
And swathed about the swelling
Of Ocean's mighty flood;
He wrought by weight and measure,
And I was with Him then:
Myself the Father's pleasure,
And mine, the sons of men.'

Thus Wisdom's words discover
Thy glory and Thy grace,
Thou everlasting Lover
Of our unworthy race!
Thy gracious eye surveyed us,
Ere stars were seen above;
In wisdom Thou hast made us,
And died for us in love.

And couldst Thou be delighted
With creatures such as we,
Who, when we saw Thee, slighted,
And nailed Thee to a tree?
Unfathomable wonder,
And mystery divine!
The voice that speaks in thunder,
Says 'Sinner, I am thine.'

William Cowper.

145 JESUS HASTING TO SUFFER

THE Saviour, what a noble flame
Was kindled in His breast,
When hasting to Jerusalem,
He marched before the rest!

Goodwill to men and zeal for God
His every thought engross;
He longs to be baptized with blood,
He pants to reach the cross.

With all His sufferings full in view,
And woes to us unknown,
Forth to the task His spirit flew;
'Twas love that urged Him on.

Lord, we return Thee what we can;
Our hearts shall sound abroad
Salvation to the dying Man,
And to the rising God.

And while Thy bleeding glories here
Engage our wondering eyes,
We learn our lighter cross to bear,
And hasten to the skies.

William Cowper.

146 JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING

SOMETIMES a light surprises
The Christian while he sings;
It is the Lord Who rises
With healing in His wings:
When comforts are declining
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining
To cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation
We sweetly then pursue
The theme of God's salvation,
And find it ever new:

Set free from present sorrow,
We cheerfully can say,
E'en let the unknown to-morrow
Bring with it what it may.

It can bring with it nothing
But He will bear us through;
Who gives the lilies clothing,
Will clothe His people too;
Beneath the spreading heavens
No creature but is fed;
And He Who feeds the ravens
Will give His children bread.

Though vine nor fig-tree neither
Their wonted fruit shall bear;
Though all the field should wither,
Nor flocks nor herds be there;
Yet, God the same abiding,
His praise shall tune my voice;
For, while in Him confiding,
I cannot but rejoice.

William Cowper.

147 THE MESSIAH *

MESSIAH! at Thy glad approach
The howling wilds are still;
Thy praises fill the lonely waste,
And breathe from every hill.

The hidden fountains, at Thy call,
Their sacred stores unlock;
Loud in the desert sudden streams
Burst living from the rock.

The incense of the Spring ascends
Upon the morning gale;
Red o'er the hill the roses bloom,
The lilies in the vale.

The kingdom of Messiah come,
Appointed times disclose;
And fairer in Emmanuel's land
The new Creation glows:

Renewed, the earth a robe of light,
A robe of beauty wears;
And in new Heavens a brighter Sun
Leads on the promised years.

John Logan.

148 ON ANOTHER'S SORROW *

CAN I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow filled?

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

And can He Who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small,
Hear the small bird's grief and care
Hear the woes that infants bear,

And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring pity in their breast
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant's tear;

And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away?
Oh no! Never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

He doth give His joy to all:
He becomes an Infant small,
He becomes a Man of Woe,
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy Maker is not by:
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy Maker is not near.

Oh, He gives to us His joy,
That our grief He may destroy.
Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

William Blake.

149 THE DIVINE IMAGE

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,
All pray in their distress,
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,
Is God our Father dear;
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,
Is Man, His child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart;
Pity, a human face;
And Love, the human form divine;
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine:
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk, or Jew.
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell,
There God is dwelling too.

William Blake.

150 JERUSALEM

AND did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

William Blake.

151 THE GREY MONK

'I DIE, I die!' The mother said,
'My children die for lack of bread.
What more has the merciless tyrant said?'
The monk sat down on the stony bed.

The blood red ran from the grey monk's side,
His hands and feet were wounded wide,
His body bent, his arms and knees
Like to the roots of ancient trees.

His eye was dry; no tear could flow:
A hollow groan first spoke his woe.
He trembled and shuddered upon the bed;
At length with a feeble cry he said:

'When God commanded this hand to write
In the studious hours of deep midnight,
He told me the writing I wrote should prove
The bane of all that on earth I love.

'My brother starved between two walls,
His children's cry my soul appals;
I mocked at the rack and grinding chain,
My bent body mocks their torturing pain.

'Thy father drew his sword in the North,
With his thousands strong he marchèd forth;
Thy brother has armed himself in steel
To avenge the wrongs thy children feel.

'But vain the sword and vain the bow,
They never can work war's overthrow.
The hermit's prayer and the widow's tear
Alone can free the world from fear.

'For a tear is an intellectual thing,
And a sigh is the sword of an angel king,
And the bitter groan of the martyr's woe
Is an arrow from the Almighty's bow.

'The hand of vengeance found the bed
To which the purple tyrant fled;
The iron hand crushed the tyrant's head,
And became a tyrant in his stead.'

William Blake.

152 THE VIRGIN *

MOTHER! whose virgin bosom was uncrossed
With the least shade of thought to sin allied;
Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;
Purer than foam on central ocean tossed;
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast;
Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible Power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in thee
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene!

William Wordsworth.

153 KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,
With ill-matched aims the architect who planned—
Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed scholars only—this immense
And glorious work of fine intelligence.
Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more;
So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering, and wandering on as loth to die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

William Wordsworth.

154 THE CREATION *

HE spake and it was done: Eternal Night,
At God's command, awakened into light:
He called the elements, Earth, Ocean, Air
He called them when they were not, and they were:
He looked through space, and, kindling o'er the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars came forth to meet His eye:
His Spirit moved upon the desert earth,
And sudden light through all things swarmed to birth;
Man from the dust He raised to rule the whole;
He breathed, and Man became a living soul:
Through Eden's groves the lord of nature trod,
Upright and pure, the image of his God.
Thus were the heavens and all their host displayed,
In wisdom thus were earth's foundations laid:
The glorious scene a holy sabbath closed;
Amidst His works the Omnipotent reposed:
And while He viewed, and blessed them from His seat,
All worlds, all beings, worshipped at His feet:

The morning stars in choral concert sang;
The rolling deep with hallelujahs rang;
Adoring angels from their orbs rejoice;
The voice of music was Creation's voice.

James Montgomery.

155 THE CRUCIFIXION

I ASKED the Heavens—'What foe to God hath done
This unexampled deed?'—The Heavens exclaim,
''Twas Man: and we in horror snatched the sun
From such a spectacle of guilt and shame.'
I asked the Sea: the Sea in fury boiled,
And answered with his voice of storms—''Twas Man:
My waves in panic at his crime recoiled,
Disclosed the abyss, and from the centre ran.'
I asked the Earth: the Earth replied aghast,
''Twas Man: and such strange pangs my bosom rent.
That still I groan and shudder at the past.'
To Man—gay, smiling, thoughtless Man, I went
And asked him next. He turned a scornful eye,
Shook his proud head, and deigned me no reply.

James Montgomery.

156 MY BAPTISMAL BIRTH-DAY

GOD'S child in Christ adopted, Christ my all,
What that earth boasts were not lost cheaply, rather
Than forfeit that blest name by which I call
The Holy One, the Almighty God, my Father?
Father! In Christ we live, and Christ in Thee;
Eternal Thou, and everlasting we.
The heir of Heaven, henceforth I fear not death:
In Christ I live, in Christ I draw the breath
Of the true life. Let then earth, sea, and sky
Make war against me! On my front I show
Their mighty Master's seal. In vain they try
To end my life, that can but end its woe.
Is that a death-bed where the Christian lies?
Yes! But not his—'tis Death itself there dies.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

157 TO NIGHT AND DEATH *

MYSTERIOUS Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! Creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun, or who could find,
Whilst fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

Joseph Blanco White.

158 WHOM HAVE I IN HEAVEN BUT THEE? *

LORD of Earth! Thy forming hand
Well this beauteous frame hath planned,
Woods that wave, and hills that tower
Ocean rolling in his power,
All that strikes the gaze unsought,
All that charms the lonely thought,
Friendship,—gem transcending price,
Love,—a flower of paradise,
Yet, amidst this scene so fair,
Should I cease Thy smile to share,
What were all its joys to me;
Whom have I on earth but Thee?

Lord of Heaven! beyond our sight
Rolls a world of purer light;
There, in love's unclouded reign,
Parted hands shall clasp again;
Martyrs there, and prophets high
Blaze a glorious company;

While immortal music rings
From unnumbered seraph strings;
O! that world is passing fair;
Yet if Thou were absent there,
What were all its joys to me?
Whom have I in Heaven but Thee?

Lord of Earth and Heaven! my breast
Seeks in Thee its only rest;
I was lost; Thy accents mild
Homeward lured Thy wandering child.
I was blind; Thy healing ray
Charmed the long eclipse away;
Source of every joy I know
Solace of my every woe,
O! if once Thy smile divine
Ceased upon my soul to shine
What were Earth and Heaven to me?
Whom have I in each but Thee?

Sir Robert Grant.

159 HIS DEAD SON *

THERE burns the throne of Him whose name
The sunbeams here write faintly,
And there my child a stranger stands,
Amid the blest and saintly;
And sobs aloud, while in his eyes
The tears o'erflowing gather:
'They come not yet: until they come
Heaven is no Heaven, my Father?
Why come they not? Why comes not she
From whom Thy will removes me?
O does she love me—love me still?
I know my mother loves me:
Then send her soon, and with her send
The brethren of my bosom:
My sisters too, Lord, let them all
Bloom round the parted blossom.

The only pang I could not bear
Was leaving them behind me;
And even now, yes, even in Heaven,
The tears of parting blind me.'

Ebenezer Elliott.

160 A HYMN OF PRAISE *

I PRAISED the Earth, in beauty seen
With garlands gay of various green;
I praised the Sea, whose ample field
Shone glorious as a silver shield;
And Earth and Ocean seemed to say
'Our beauties are but for a day!'

I praised the Sun, whose chariot rolled
On wheels of amber and of gold;
I praised the Moon, whose softer eye
Gleamed sweetly through the summer sky:—
And Moon and Sun in answer said,
'Our days of light are numberèd!'

O God! O Good beyond compare!
If thus Thy meaner works are fair;
If thus Thy bounties gild the span
Of ruined earth and sinful man;
How glorious must the mansion be
Where Thy redeemed shall dwell with Thee!

Reginald Heber.

161 THE ANGELS

O CAPTAIN of God's host, whose dreadful might
Led forth to war the armèd seraphim,
And from the starry height,
Subdued in burning fight,
Cast down that ancient dragon, dark and grim!

Thine angels, Christ, we laud in solemn lays,
Our elder brethren of the crystal sky,
Who, 'mid Thy glory's blaze,
The ceaseless anthem raise,
And gird Thy throne in faithful ministry.

We celebrate their love, whose viewless wing
Hath left for us so oft their mansion high,
The mercies of their King
To mortal saints to bring,
Or guard the couch of slumbering infancy.

But Thee, the First and Last, we glorify,
Who, when Thy world was sunk in death and sin,
Not with Thine hierarchy,
The armies of the sky,
But didst with Thine own arm the battle win.

Therefore, with angels and archangels, we
To Thy dear love our thankful chorus raise,
And tune our songs to Thee,
Who art, and art to be,
And endless as Thy mercies sound Thy praise.

Reginald Heber.

162 ABOU BEN ADHEM

ABOU Ben Adhem—may his tribe increase—
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold
And to the presence in the room he said:
'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head,
And with a look made all of sweet accord,
Answered: 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said: 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And shewed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Leigh Hunt.

163 THE POOR MAN'S HYMN *

As much have I of worldly good
As e'er my Master had:
I diet on as dainty food,
And am as richly clad,
—Though plain my garb, though scant my board—
As Mary's Son and Nature's Lord.

The manger was His Infant bed,
His home, the mountain cave,
He had not where to lay His head,
He borrowed even His grave.
Earth yielded Him no resting-spot,
Her Maker, but she knew Him not.

As much the world's goodwill I bear,
Its favours and applause,
As He whose blessed Name I bear,
—Hated without a cause,
Despised, rejected, mocked by pride,
Betrayed, forsaken, crucified.

Why should I court my Master's foe?
Why should I fear its frown?
Why should I seek for rest below,
Or sigh for brief renown?—
A pilgrim to a better land,
An heir of joys at God's right hand?

Josiah Conder.

164 THE MARTYR'S SONG *

WHAT means yon blaze on high?
The empyrean sky
Like the rich veil of some proud fane is rending.
I see the star-paved land,
Where all the angels stand,
Even to the highest height in burning rows ascending.
Some with their wings dispread,
And bowed the stately head,

As on some mission of God's love departing,
Like flames from midnight conflagration starting;
Behold! the appointed messengers are they,
And nearest earth they wait to waft our souls away.

Higher and higher still
More lofty statures fill
The jasper courts of the everlasting dwelling.
Cherub and seraph pace
The illimitable space,
While sleep the folded plumes from their white shoulders swelling.
From all the harping throng
Bursts the tumultuous song,
Like the unceasing sounds of cataracts pouring,
Hosanna o'er Hosanna louder soaring,
That faintly echoing down to earthly ears,
Hath seemed the concert sweet of the harmonious spheres.

Still my rapt spirit mounts,
And lo! beside the founts
Of flowing light, Christ's chosen saints reclining;
Distinct amid the blaze
Their palm-crowned heads they raise,
Their white robes even through that o'erpowering lustre shining.
Each in his place of state,
Long the bright Twelve have sate,
O'er the celestial Sion high uplifted;
While those with deep prophetic raptures gifted,
Where Life's glad river rolls its tideless streams,
Enjoy the full completion of their heavenly dreams.

Beyond! ah, Who is there,
With the white snowy hair?
Tis He! tis He! the Son of Man appearing!
At the right hand of One,
The darkness of whose throne
That sun-eyed seraph host behold with awe and fearing.

O'er Him the rainbow springs,
And spreads its emerald wings,
Down to the glassy sea His loftiest seat o'er-arching,
Hark!—thunders from His throne, like steel-clad armies marching—
The Christ! the Christ commands us to His home!
Jesus, Redeemer, Lord, we come, we come, we come!

Henry Hart Milman.

165 TO A THRUSH SINGING IN JANUARY *

SWEET bird, up earliest in the morn,
Up earliest in the year,
Far in the quiet mist are borne
Thy matins soft and clear.

As linnet soft, and clear as lark,
Well hast thou ta'en thy part,
Where many an ear thy notes may reach,
And here and there a heart.

The first snow-wreaths are scarcely gone,
(They stayed but half a day)
The berries bright hang lingering on;
Yet thou hast learned thy lay.

One gleam, one gale of western air
Has hardly brushed thy wing;
Yet thou hast given thy welcome fair,
Good-morrow to the spring.

Perhaps within thy carol's sound
Some wakeful mourner lies,
Dim roaming days and years around,
That ne'er again may rise.

He thanks thee with a tearful eye,
For thou hast winged his spright
Back to some hour when hopes were high
And dearest friends in sight;

That simple, fearless note of thine
Has pierced the cloud of care,
And lit awhile the gleam divine
That blessed his infant prayer;

Ere he had known, his faith to blight,
The scorner's withering smile;
While hearts, he deemed, beat true and right,
Here in our Christian Isle.

That sunny morning glimpse is gone,
That morning note is still;
The dun dark day comes lowering on,
The spoilers roam at will;

Yet calmly rise, and boldly strive;
The sweet bird's early song
Ere evening fall shall oft revive,
And cheer thee all day long.

Are we not sworn to serve our King?
He sworn with us to be?
The birds that chant before the spring
Are truer far than we.

John Keble.

166 HOOKER *

VOICE of the wise of old!
Go breathe thy thrilling whispers now
In cells where learnèd eyes late vigils hold,
And teach proud Science where to vail her brow.

Voice of the meekest man!
Now while the Church for combat arms,
Calmly do thou confirm her awful ban,
Thy words to her be conquering, soothing charms.

Voice of the fearless Saint!
Ring like a trump, where gentle hearts
Beat high for truth, but, doubting, cower and faint:
Tell them, the hour is come, and they must take their parts.

John Keble.

167 AUTUMN LEAVES

RED o'er the forest peers the setting sun,
The line of yellow light dies fast away
That crowned the eastern copse: and chill and dun
Falls on the moor the brief November day.

Now the tired hunter winds a parting note,
And Echo bids good-night from every glade;
Yet wait awhile, and see the calm leaves float
Each to his rest beneath their parent shade.

How like decaying life they seem to glide!
And yet no second spring have they in store,
But where they fall forgotten to abide,
Is all their portion, and they ask no more.

Soon o'er their heads blithe April airs shall sing,
A thousand wild-flowers round them shall unfold,
The green buds glisten in the dews of spring,
And all be vernal rapture as of old.

Unconscious they in waste oblivion lie,
In all the world of busy life around
No thought of them; in all the bounteous sky
No drop, for them, of kindly influence found.

Man's portion is to die and rise again;
Yet he complains, while these unmurmuring part
With their sweet lives, as pure from sin and stain,
As his when Eden held his virgin heart.

And haply half unblamed his murmuring voice
Might sound in Heaven, were all his second life
Only the first renewed, the heathen's choice,
A round of listless joy and weary strife.

For dreary were this earth, if earth were all,
Though brightened oft by dear Affection's kiss;
Who for the spangles wears the funeral pall?
But catch a gleam beyond it, and 'tis bliss.

Heavy and dull this frame of limbs and heart,
Whether slow creeping on cold earth, or borne
On lofty steed, or loftier prow, we dart
O'er wave or field: yet breezes laugh to scorn

Our puny speed, and birds, and clouds in heaven,
And fish, like living shafts that pierce the main,
And stars that shoot through freezing air at even—
Who but would follow, might he break his chain?

And thou shalt break it soon; the grovelling worm
Shall find his wings, and soar as fast and free
As his transfigured Lord with lightning form
And snowy vest—such grace He won for thee,

When from the grave He sprung at dawn of morn,
And led through boundless air thy conquering road,
Leaving a glorious track, where saints new-born
Might fearless follow to their blest abode.

But first, by many a stern and fiery blast
The world's rude furnace must thy blood refine,
And many a gale of keenest woe be passed,
Till every pulse beat true to airs divine,

Till every limb obey the mounting soul;
The mounting soul, the call by Jesus given:
He Who the stormy heart can so control,
The laggard body soon will waft to Heaven.

John Keble.

168 CALVARY

'FILL high the bowl, and spice it well, and pour
The dews oblivious: for the Cross is sharp,
The Cross is sharp, and He
Is tenderer than a lamb.

'He wept by Lazarus' grave—how will He bear
This bed of anguish? and His pale weak form
Is worn with many a watch
Of sorrow and unrest.

'His sweat last night was as great drops of blood,
And the sad burthen pressed Him so to earth,
The very torturers paused
To help Him on His way.

Fill high the bowl, benumb His aching sense
With medicined sleep.'—O awful in Thy woe!
The parching thirst of death
Is on Thee, and Thou triest

The slumbrous potion bland, and wilt not drink:
Not sullen, nor in scorn, like haughty man
With suicidal hand
Putting his solace by:

But as at first Thine all-pervading look
Saw from Thy Father's bosom to the abyss,
Measuring in calm presage
The infinite descent;

So to the end, though now of mortal pangs
Made heir, and emptied of Thy glory awhile,
With unaverted eye
Thou meetest all the storm.

Thou wilt feel all, that Thou mayst pity all;
And rather wouldst Thou wrestle with strong pain,
Than overcloud Thy soul,
So clear in agony,

Or lose one glimpse of Heaven before the time.
O most entire and perfect sacrifice,
Renewed in every pulse
That on the tedious Cross

Told the long hours of death, as, one by one,
The life-strings of that tender heart gave way;
Even sinners, taught by Thee,
Look Sorrow in the face,

And bid her freely welcome, unbeguiled
By false kind solaces, and spells of earth:
And yet not all unsoothed;
For when was Joy so dear,

As the deep calm that breathed, *Father, forgive!*
Or, *Be with Me in Paradise to-day?*
And, though the strife be sore,
Yet in His parting breath

Love masters Agony; the soul that seemed
Forsaken, feels her present God again,
And in her Father's arms
Contented dies away.

John Keble.

169 IN CHOIRS AND PLACES WHERE THEY SING, HERE FOLLOWETH THE ANTHEM

LORD, make my heart a place where angels sing!
For surely thoughts low-breathed by Thee
Are angels gliding near on noiseless wing;
And where a home they see

Swept clean, and garnished with adoring joy,
They enter in and dwell,
And teach that heart to swell
With heavenly melody, their own untired employ.

John Keble.

170 THE UNKNOWN GOD*

THE Lord hath builded for Himself
He needs no earthly dome;
The universe His dwelling is,
Eternity His home.

Yon glorious sky His temple stands,
So lofty, bright, and blue,
All lamped with stars, and curtained round
With clouds of every hue.

Earth is His altar: Nature there
Her daily tribute pays;
The elements upon Him wait;
The seasons roll His praise.

Where shall I see Him? How describe
The Dread, Eternal One?
His foot-prints are in every place,
Himself is found in none.

He called the world, and it arose;
The heavens, and they appeared:
His hand poured forth the mighty deep;
His arm the mountains reared.

He sets His foot upon the hills,
And earth beneath Him quakes;
He walks upon the hurricane,
And in the thunder speaks.

I search the rounds of space and time,
Nor find His semblance there:
Grandeur has nothing so sublime,
Nor Beauty half so fair.

Henry Francis Lyte.

171 THE MEMORIAL OF MARY *

THOU hast thy record in the monarch's hall;
And on the waters of the far mid sea;
And where the mighty mountain-shadows fall,
The Alpine hamlet keeps a thought of thee;
Where'er beneath some oriental tree
The Christian traveller rests; where'er the child
Looks upward from the English mother's knee,
With earnest eyes in wondering reverence mild,

There art thou known—where'er the Book of Light
Bears hope and healing—there, beyond all blight,
Is borne thy memory, and all praise above:
O, say what deed so lifted thy sweet name,
Mary, to that pure silent place of fame:
One lowly offering of exceeding love.

Felicia Dorothea Hemans.

172 A NIGHT THOUGHT*

THOU must go forth alone, my soul,
Thou must go forth alone,
To other scenes, to other worlds,
That mortal hath not known.
Thou must go forth alone, my soul,
To tread the narrow vale;
But He, whose word is sure, hath said,
His comforts shall not fail.

Thou must go forth alone, my soul,
Along the darksome way,
Where the bright sun has never shed
His warm and glorious ray;
And yet the Sun of Righteousness
Shall rise amidst the gloom,
And scatter from thy trembling gaze
The shadows of the tomb.

Thou must go forth alone, my soul,
To meet thy God above;
But shrink not: He has said, my soul,
He is a God of Love.
His rod and staff shall comfort thee,
Across the dreary road,
Till thou shalt join the blessed ones
In Heaven's serene abode.

Mary Anne Jevons.

173 ON THE LATE DR. ARNOLD *

'Twas his to teach
Day after day, from pulpit and from desk,
That the most childish sin which man can do
Is yet a sin which Jesus never did,
When Jesus was a Child, and yet a sin
For which, in lowly pain, He lived and died:
That for the bravest sin that e'er was praised
The King Eternal wore the crown of thorns.
In him was Jesus crucified again;
For every sin which he could not prevent
Stuck in him like a nail. His heart bled for it,
As it had been a foul sin of his own.
Heavy his cross, and stoutly did he bear it,
Even to the foot of holy Calvary;
And if at last he sunk beneath the weight,
There were not wanting souls whom he had taught
The way to Paradise, that, in white robes,
Thronged to the gate to hail their shepherd home.

Hartley Coleridge.

174 PRAYER

Be not afraid to pray—to pray is right.
Pray, if thou canst, with hope; but ever pray,
Though hope be weak, or sick with long delay;
Pray in the darkness, if there be no light.
Far is the time, remote from human sight,
When war and discord on the earth shall cease;
Yet every prayer for universal peace
Avails the blessed time to expedite.
Whate'er is good to wish, ask that of Heaven,
Though it be what thou canst not hope to see;
Pray to be perfect, though material leaven
Forbid the spirit so on earth to be:
But if for any wish thou darest not pray,
Then pray to God to cast that wish away.

Hartley Coleridge.

175 HEAVENLY LEADINGS *

DID we but see,
When life first opened, how our journey lay
Between its earliest and its closing day,
Or view ourselves, as we one time shall be,
Who strive for the high prize, such sight would break
The youthful spirit, though bold for Jesus' sake.

But Thou, dear Lord!
Whilst I traced out bright scenes which were to come,
Isaac's pure blessings, and a verdant home,
Didst spare me, and withhold Thy fearful word;
Wiling me year by year till I am found
A pilgrim pale with Paul's sad girdle bound.

John Henry Newman.

176 THE ZEAL OF JEHU

THOU to wax fierce
In the cause of the Lord,
To threat and to pierce
With the heavenly sword!
Anger and zeal,
And the joy of the brave,
Who bade *thee* to feel,
Sin's slave?

The altar's pure flame
Consumes as it soars:
Faith meetly may blame,
For it serves and adores.
Thou warnest and smitest!
Yet Christ must atone
For a soul that thou slightest—
Thine own.

John Henry Newman.

177 THE BAPTIST

How didst thou start, thou holy Baptist, bid
To pour repentance on the Sinless Brow!
Then all thy meekness, from thy hearers hid
Beneath the ascetic's port and preacher's fire,
Flowed forth, and with a pang thou didst desire
He might be chief, not thou.

And so on us, at whiles, it falls to claim
Powers that we fear, or dare some forward part;
Nor must we shrink as cravens from the blame
Of pride, in common eyes, or purpose deep;
But with pure thoughts look up to God, and keep
Our secret in our heart.

John Henry Newman.

178 REST *

THEY are at rest:
We may not stir the heaven of their repose
By rude invoking voice, or prayer addrest
In waywardness to those
Who in the mountain grots of Eden lie,
And hear the fourfold river as it murmurs by.

They hear it sweep
In distance down the dark and savage vale;
But they at eddying pool or current deep
Shall never more grow pale;
They hear, and meekly muse, as fain to know
How long untired, unspent, that giant stream shall flow.

And soothing sounds
Blend with the neighbouring waters as they glide;
Posted along the haunted garden's bounds
Angelic forms abide,
Echoing, as words of watch, o'er lawn and grove,
The verses of that hymn which seraphs chant above.

John Henry Newman.

179 THE CHURCH'S YEAR *

THE Natural Year, swift shadow of the sun,
Wakes from the earth a chequered tapestry,
To greet his footsteps as he passes on,
Snows, and bright dews, sweet violets, lilies high,
Then fields of waving gold, then varied dye
Of Autumn; but the snow and violets sweet,
Lilies, and Autumn's wild variety,
And waving corn, fast as the sunbeams fleet,
They bow their head, and die, beneath his hurrying feet.

Not so the path the holy Church doth tread,
The Year, that walketh in her light unseen,
Around its steps awakens from the dead
Hopes that shall never die. Through the serene
Of the calm Sunday, like an alley green,
Are seen the eternal towers; and where lights gild
Death's twilight portal, us and them between,
She shews her suffering Lord; throughout the wild,
She shews her suffering Lord to her faint wandering child.

At every turn throughout Life's wilderness,
In pillared fire, smote rock, or healèd springs,
His presence she reveals, and power to bless:
When the autumnal wind of ruin sings
She blends her Advent chant of happier things,
As louder swell the sounds of stern decay
The higher doth she lift her herald voice, till wings
And angel forms are seen, and on our way
Springs from dark Winter's womb the face of endless day—

The Christmas dawn. She through the waning night
Her leaning child hath to that cradle led,
And bids him all unlearn, but the meek sight
And Heaven's own lesson, of the homely shed,
The Babe and Mother. Nature now is dead,

And darksome; but in wintry skies is set
A wreath that glitters o'er that Infant's head
Her fairest stars are round His cradle met,
Like gems of light within His kingly coronet.

Then vernal Lent comes on—Nature puts up
Her sweetest notes, and dons her fairest trim,
The Church is drinking of her Saviour's cup,
And far into the wild hath gone with Him;
Nature's glad tones upon her prison dim.
Break not, or with calm influence on the soul
Come, like faint sounds of distant cherubim,
To cheer the chastened spirit, not control,
While prayer clears her dull eye to see the eternal goal.

O Thou, on whom the angels dare not gaze,
In the deep bosom of Divinity,
But veil their faces from the o'erpowering rays
Of Thine eternal beauty! Thee we see
With countenance sore marred with agony
Beyond the sons of men. O wondrous power
Of Love divine! Shall man not watch with Thee
One little hour? for scarce one fleeting hour,
Set 'gainst the days of Heaven, is life's fast fading flower.

A little further in the solemn grove,
Into the bosom of the silent night,
A little further onward let us move
From the rude world—yet further—from the sight
Of kindred and of friends, that so aright
We may discern our weakness, and apply
Our hearts to God alone, while the broad light,
The witness of His sorrows, is on high,
The paschal moon which o'er yon olive mount stands by.

Isaac Williams.

180 THE SECOND COMING

UNTO the East we turn, with watchful eyes,
Where opens the white haze of silvery lawn,
And the still trees stand in the streak of dawn,
Until the Sun of Righteousness shall rise,
And far behind shall open all the skies,
And golden clouds of angels be withdrawn
Around His presence. Then there shall be gone,
Fleeing before His face in dread surprise,
The Heaven and Earth and the affrighted sea,
And the tribunal shall be set on high,
And we the fiery trial must abide
Like nightly travellers to the kindling sky,
Awake or sleeping to yon eastern side
We turn, and know not when the time shall be.

Isaac Williams.

181 THE SLEEP

OF all the thoughts of God that are
Born inward unto souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is,
For gift or grace, surpassing this—
'He giveth His beloved, sleep'?

What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp to sweep,
The patriot's voice to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown to light the brows—
'He giveth His beloved, sleep.'

What do we give to our beloved?
A little faith all undisproved,
A little dust to overweep,
And bitter memories, to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake—
'He giveth His beloved, sleep.'

'Sleep soft, beloved!' we sometimes say,
But have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep.
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber when
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
O delvèd gold, the wailer's heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
And giveth His beloved, sleep.

His dews drop mutely on the hill;
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men sow and reap.
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

Ay, men may wonder while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man
Confirmed in such a rest to keep;
But angels say, and through the word
I think their happy smile is *heard*—
'He giveth His beloved, sleep.'

For me, my heart that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the mummers leap,
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on His love repose,
Who giveth His beloved, sleep.

And friends, dear friends,—when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep,
Let One, most loving of you all,
Say, 'Not a tear must o'er her fall;
He giveth His beloved, sleep.'

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

182 A PROPHECY *

ON Sinai's steep I saw the morning cloud,
Shattered with light roll off on either hand,
And on the topmost peak an angel stand
That lifted up his arms and cried aloud
And shook the sea and land.

'The night is ended and the morning nears,
Awake, look up, I hear the gathering sound
Of coming cycles, like an Ocean round,
I see the glory of a thousand years
Lightening from bound to bound.

'Woe, woe, the Earth is faint, its heart is old,
And none look upward. Where is one who saith,
Forgive my sins by reason of my faith?
Where is one truthful bard, one prophet bold,
One heart that listeneth?

'One holy soul that prayeth night and morn,
One kindly hermit or one lowly sage,
One adamantine warrior who can wage
A steadfast war without the arms of scorn
Against a scornful age?

'Where is the promise of the world's great youth,
The sunrise of the soul, when God's own eye
Scattered the darkness of Futurity,
And kings bowed down and caught the light of Truth
Directly from on high?

'The hour is come again; the world-wide voice
Of God shall cry into the ears of Time,
Scorners shall seek and saints shall welcome Him,
And know the Ancient Presence and rejoice
As in the days of prime.

'And they that dwell apart shall know each other,
And they that hymn their solemn songs alone
Shall hear far voices mingling with their own,
And understand the utterance of a brother
In every tongue and tone.

'That note shall soar from every living heart,
That endless note shall never die away:
God, only God, to-day as yesterday,
Thou wert from everlasting, and Thou art
For ever and for aye!'

Frederick Tennyson.

183

LORD, many times I am aweary quite *
Of mine own self, my sin, my vanity—
Yet be not Thou, or I am lost outright,
Weary of me.

And hate against myself I often bear,
And enter with myself in fierce debate:
Take Thou my part against myself, nor share
In that just hate.

Best friends might loathe us, if what things perverse
We know of our own selves, they also knew:
Lord, Holy One! if Thou Who knowest worse
Should loathe us too!

Richard Chenevix Trench.

184 RETURNING HOME

To leave unseen so many a glorious sight,
To leave so many lands unvisited,
To leave so many worthiest books unread,
Unrealized so many visions bright;—
Oh! wretched yet inevitable spite
Of our brief span, that we must yield our breath,
And wrap us in the unfeeling coil of death,
So much remaining of unproved delight!
But hush, my soul, and vain regrets, be stilled;
Find rest in Him Who is the complement
Of whatsoe'er transcends our mortal doom,
Of baffled hope and unfulfilled intent;
In the clear vision and aspect of whom
All longings and all hopes shall be fulfilled.

Richard Chenevix Trench.

185 THE KINGDOM OF GOD

I SAY to thee, do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet
In lane, highway, or open street—

That he and we and all men move
Under a canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above;

That doubt and trouble, fear and pain
And anguish, all are shadows vain,
That death itself shall not remain;

That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth may thread,
Through dark ways underground be led;

Yet if we will one Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way
Shall issue out in heavenly day.

And we, on divers shores now cast,
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father's house at last.

And ere thou leave him, say thou this
Yet one word more—they only miss
The winning of that final bliss,

Who will not count it true, that Love,
Blessing, not cursing, rules above,
And that in it we live and move.

And one thing further make him know,
That to believe these things are so,
This firm faith never to forego,

Despite of all which seems at strife
With blessing, all with curses rife,
That this *is* blessing, this *is* life.

Richard Chenevix Trench

186

IF there had anywhere appeared in space
Another place of refuge, where to flee,
Our hearts had taken refuge in that place,
And not with Thee.

For we against creation's bars had beat
Like prisoned eagles, through great worlds had sought
Though but a foot of ground to plant our feet,
Where Thou wert not.

And only when we found in earth and air,
In heaven or hell, that such might nowhere be—
That we could not flee from Thee anywhere,
We fled to Thee.

Richard Chenevix Trench.

187 FROM 'IN MEMORIAM'

WHEN Lazarus left his charnel-cave,
And home to Mary's house returned,
Was this demanded—if he yearned
To hear her weeping by his grave?

'Where wert thou, brother, those four days?'
There lives no record of reply,
Which telling what it is to die
Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbours met,
The streets were filled with joyful sound,
A solemn gladness even crowned
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!
The rest remaineth unrevealed;
He told it not; or something sealed
The lips of that Evangelist.

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits,
And He that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,
Borne down by gladness so complete,
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure;
What souls possess themselves so pure,
Or is there blessedness like theirs?

Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

188 THE HIGHER PANTHEISM

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him Who reigns?

Is not the Vision He? though He be not that which He seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why;
For is He not all but that which has power to feel 'I am I'?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillest
thy doom
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendour
and gloom?

Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with
Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands
and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law, the thunder is yet His
voice.

Law is God, say some: no God at all, says the fool;
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent
in a pool.

And the ear of man cannot hear; and the eye of
man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision—were it
not He?

Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

189 FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

190 CROSSING THE BAR

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

191 THE MIDNIGHT MASS IN S. PETER'S

I, THE sinner that speak to you,
Was in Rome this night, and stood, and knew
Both this and more. For see, for see,
The dark is rent, mine eye is free
To pierce the crust of the outer wall,
And I view inside, and all there, all,
As the swarming hollow of a hive,
The whole Basilica alive!
Men in the chancel, body and nave,
Men on the pillars' architrave,
Men on the statues, men on the tombs
With popes and kings in their porphyry wombs,
All famishing in expectation
Of the main-altar's consummation.
For see, for see, the rapturous moment
Approaches, and earth's best endowment
Blends with Heaven's; the taper-fires
Pant up, the winding brazen spires
Heave loftier yet the baldachin[1];
The incense-gaspings, long kept in,
Suspire in clouds; the organ blatant
Holds his breath and grovels latent,
As if God's hushing finger grazed him,
(Like Behemoth when He praised him)
At the silver bell's shrill tinkling,
Quick cold drops of terror sprinkling
On the sudden pavement strewed
With faces of the multitude.

[1] canopy over the altar.

Earth breaks up, time drops away,
In flows Heaven, with its new day
Of endless life, when He Who trod,
Very Man and very God,
This earth in weakness, shame and pain,
Dying the death whose signs remain
Up yonder on the accursed tree,—
Shall come again, no more to be
Of captivity the thrall,
But the one God, All in all,
King of kings, Lord of lords,
As His servant John received the words,
'I died and live for evermore!'

Robert Browning.

192 POMPILIA

(The Pope speaks.)

FIRST of the first,
Such I pronounce Pompilia, then as now
Perfect in whiteness: stoop thou down, my child,
Give one good moment to the poor old Pope
Heart-sick at having all his world to blame—
Let me look at thee in the flesh as erst,
Let me enjoy the old clean linen garb,
Not the new splendid vesture! Armed and crowned,
Would Michael, yonder, be, nor crowned nor armed,
The less pre-eminent angel? Everywhere
I see in the world the intellect of man,
That sword, the energy his subtle spear,
The knowledge which defends him like a shield—
Everywhere; but they make not up, I think,
The marvel of a soul like thine, earth's flower
She holds up to the softened gaze of God!

It was not given Pompilia to know much,
Speak much, to write a book, to move mankind,
Be memorized by who records my time.
Yet if in purity and patience, if
In faith held fast despite the plucking fiend,
Safe like the signet stone with the new name

That saints are known by,—if in right returned
For wrong, most pardon for worst injury,
If there be any virtue, any praise,—
Then will this woman-child have proved — who knows ?—
Just the one prize vouchsafed unworthy me,
Seven years a gardener of the untoward ground,
I till,—this earth, my blood and sweat manure
All the long day that barrenly grows dusk:
At least one blossom makes me proud at eve
Born 'mid the briers of my enclosure! Still
(Oh, here as elsewhere, nothingness of man!)
Those be the plants, imbedded yonder south
To mellow in the morning, those made fat
By the master's eye, that yield such timid leaf,
Uncertain bred, as product of his pains!
While—see how this mere chance-sown, cleft-nursed seed,
That sprang up by the wayside 'neath the foot
Of the enemy, this breaks all into blaze,
Spreads itself, one great glory of desire
To incorporate the whole great sun it loves
From the inch-height whence it looks and longs! My flower,
My rose, I gather for the breast of God.

Robert Browning.

193 PROSPICE

FEAR death? —to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle 's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.

I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute 's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

Robert Browning.

194 THE SORROWFUL WORLD*

I HEARD the wild beasts in the woods complain;
Some slept, while others waken to sustain
Through night and day the sad monotonous round,
Half savage and half pitiful the sound.

The outcry rose to God through all the air,
The worship of distress, an animal prayer,
Loud vehement pleadings, not unlike to those
Job uttered in his agony of woes.

The very pauses, when they came, were rife
With sickening sounds of too successful strife,
As, when the clash of battle dies away,
The groans of night succeed the shrieks of day.

Man's scent the untamed creatures scarce can bear,
As if his tainted blood defiled the air;
In the vast woods they fret as in a cage,
Or fly in fear, or gnash their teeth with rage.

The beasts of burden linger on their way,
Like slaves who will not speak when they obey;
Their faces, when their looks to us they raise,
With something of reproachful patience gaze.

Earth seems to make a sound in places lone,
Sleeps through the day, but wakes at night to moan,
Shunning our confidence, as if we were
A guilty burden it could hardly bear.

Labour itself is but a sorrowful song,
The protest of the weak against the strong;
Over rough waters, and in obstinate fields,
And from dank mines, the same sad sound it yields.

O God, the fountain of perennial gladness,
Thy whole creation overflows with sadness;
Sights, sounds, are full of sorrow and alarm;
Even sweet scents have but a pensive charm.

Doth Earth send nothing up to Thee but moans?
Father, canst Thou find melody in groans?
Oh can it be, that Thou, the God of bliss,
Canst feed Thy glory on a world like this?

Ah me! that sin should have such chemic power
To turn to dross the gold of Nature's dower,
And straightway, of its single self, unbind
The eternal vision of Thy jubilant mind!

Alas! of all this sorrow there is need;
For us Earth weeps, for us the creatures bleed:
Thou art content, if all this woe imparts
The sense of exile to repentant hearts.

Yes! it is well for us: from these alarms,
Like children scared we fly into Thine arms;
And pressing sorrows put our pride to rout
With a swift faith which has not time to doubt.

We cannot herd in peace with wild beasts rude;
We dare not live in Nature's solitude;
In how few eyes of men can we behold
Enough of love to make us calm and bold?

Oh, it is well for us: with angry glance
Life glares at us, or looks at us askance:
Seek where we will,—Father! we see it now,—
None love us, trust us, welcome us, but Thou.

Frederick William Faber.

195 THE DAILY LESSON *

SINCE day by day,
O Heavenly Master, Thou wouldst have me learn
Some lesson flesh and blood will scarce discern,
And shrink away;

To Thee on high
Morning by morning shall my soul draw near;
Oh give me, while I learn, the hearing ear,
The seeing eye.

I knew of old
Thy Beauty in green flowers and summer skies,
And in the clouds where suns go down and rise
With hues of gold;

Thy Wisdom, too,
That fixed the planets' course, and hung them round
To light the earth, and gave the sea his bound,
Right well I knew;

In tempests dread,
That at Thy bidding rise and hold them still,
And lightnings coming forth to do Thy will,
Thy Power I read;

But oh! Thy Love,—
Trial must teach me that, which ease could not;
In earthly joys entwined, I had forgot
The things above:

And who but Thou
So lovingly a straying lamb would seek,
Bind up the broken, and console the weak,
As here, as now?

John Mason Neale.

196 STARS*

SEE! through the heavenly arch
With silent stately march
The starry ranks for ever sweep;
In graduate scale of might
They all are sons of light,
And all their times and orders keep.

O glorious, countless host,
Which shall I praise the most?
Your lustrous groups, or course exact?
Ye on your way sublime
Defy confusing time
Your light to dim, your path distract.

Earth's early fathers saw
The gospel and the law
In the firm beauty of the skies:
O Thou unswerving Will
The unveiled heavens still
Show Thee as glorious, good, and wise.

Lord of the starry night,
With awe and with delight
Under Thy temple dome we pray:
Still as we gaze above,
Temper our fear with love,
That we may filial homage pay.

Not as the primal force
Impelling Nature's course,
We know Thee, but as Father dear:
O, if with foolish mind
We judge Thee weakly kind,
Correct false love with filial fear.

Thomas Toke Lynch.

197 MY GOD, I LOVE THE WORLD

My God, I love the world,
I love it well;
Its wonder, fairness, and delight,
More than my tongue can tell;
And ever in my heart, like morning clouds,
New earth-loves rise and swell.

Lilies I love, and stars,
Dewdrops, and the great sea;
Colour, and form, and sound,
Combining variously;
The rush of the wind, and the overhanging vast—
Voiceless immensity.

Thou World-Creator art,
World-Lover too;
In delight didst found the deep,
In delight uprear the blue;
And with an infinite love and carefulness
The wide earth furnish through.

Thomas Toke Lynch.

198 QUI LABORAT ORAT

O ONLY Source of all our light and life,
Whom as our truth, our strength, we see and feel,
But whom the hours of mortal moral strife
Alone aright reveal!

Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly brought,
Thy presence owns ineffable, divine;
Chastised each rebel self-encentred thought,
My will adoreth Thine.

With eye down-dropt, if then this earthly mind
Speechless remain, or speechless e'en depart;
Nor seek to see—for what of earthly kind
Can see Thee as Thou art?—

If well-assured 'tis but profanely bold
In thought's abstractest forms to seem to see,
It dare not dare the dread communion hold
In ways unworthy Thee.

O not unowned, Thou shalt unnamed forgive,
In worldly walks the prayerless heart prepare;
And if in work its life it seem to live,
Shalt make that work be prayer.

Nor times shall lack, when while the work it plies,
Unsummoned powers the blinding film shall part,
And scarce by happy tears made dim, the eyes
In recognition start.

But, as Thou willest, give or e'en forbear
The beatific supersensual sight,
So, with Thy blessing blest, that humbler prayer
Approach Thee morn and night.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

199 WHAT WENT YE OUT FOR TO SEE?

Across the sea, along the shore,
In numbers more and ever more,
From lonely hut and busy town,
The valley through, the mountain down,
What was it ye went out to see,
Ye silly folk of Galilee?
The reed that in the wind doth shake?
The weed that washes in the lake?
The reeds that waver, the weeds that float?—
A Young Man preaching in a boat.

What was it ye went out to hear
By sea and land, from far and near?
A Teacher? Rather seek the feet
Of those who sit in Moses' seat.
Go humbly seek and bow to them,
Far off in great Jerusalem.

From them that in her courts ye saw,
Her perfect Doctors of the law,
What is it came ye here to note?—
A Young Man preaching in a boat.

A Prophet! Boys and women weak!
Declare or cease to rave;
Whence is it He hath learned to speak?
Say, who His doctrine gave?

A Prophet? Prophet wherefore He
Of all in Israel tribes?—
He teacheth with authority
And not as do the Scribes.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

200 A MOTHER'S SONG *

DEEP in the warm vale the village is sleeping,
Sleeping the firs on the bleak rock above;
Nought wakes, save grateful hearts, silently creeping
Up to the Lord in the might of their love.

What Thou hast given to me, Lord, here I bring Thee,
Odour, and light, and the magic of gold;
Feet which must follow Thee, lips which must sing Thee,
Limbs which must ache for Thee ere they grow old.

What Thou hast given to me, Lord, here I tender,
Life of mine own life, the fruit of my love;
Take him, yet leave him me, till I shall render
Count of the precious charge, kneeling above.

Charles Kingsley.

201 THE DAY OF THE LORD *

THE Day of the Lord is at hand, at hand:
Its storms roll up the sky:
The nations sleep starving on heaps of gold;
All dreamers toss and sigh;

The night is darkest before the morn;
When the pain is sorest the child is born,
And the Day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, angels of God—
Freedom, and Mercy, and Truth;
Come! for the Earth is grown coward and old,
Come down, and renew us her youth.
Wisdom, Self-Sacrifice, Daring, and Love,
Haste to the battle-field, stoop from above,
To the Day of the Lord at hand.

Gather you, gather you, hounds of hell—
Famine, and Plague, and War;
Idleness, Bigotry, Cant, and Misrule,
Gather, and fall in the snare!
Hireling and Mammonite, Bigot and Knave,
Crawl to the battle-field, sneak to your grave,
In the Day of the Lord at hand.

Who would sit down and sigh for a lost age of gold,
While the Lord of all ages is here?
True hearts will leap up at the trumpet of God,
And those who can suffer can dare.
Each old age of gold was an iron age too,
And the meekest of saints may find stern work to do,
In the Day of the Lord at hand.

Charles Kingsley.

202 IMMORTALITY

FOILED by our fellow-men, depressed, outworn,
We leave the brutal world to take its way,
And, *Patience! In another life*, we say,
The world shall be thrust down, and we up-borne.

And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn
The world's poor, routed leavings? or will they,
Who failed under the heat of this life's day,
Support the fervours of the Heavenly morn?

No, no! the energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun;
And he who flagged not in the earthly strife,
From strength to strength advancing—only he,
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

Matthew Arnold.

203 THE GOOD SHEPHERD WITH THE KID

'HE saves the sheep, the goats He doth not save!'
So rang Tertullian's sentence, on the side
Of that unpitying Phrygian sect* which cried:
'Him can no fount of fresh forgiveness lave,
Who sins, once washed by the baptismal wave!'
So spake the fierce Tertullian. But she sighed,
The infant Church; of love she felt the tide
Stream on her from her Lord's yet recent grave.

And then she smiled, and in the Catacombs,
With eye suffused but heart inspirèd true,
On those walls subterranean, where she hid
Her head in ignominy, death, and tombs,
She her Good Shepherd's hasty image drew;
And on His shoulders, not a lamb, a kid.

Matthew Arnold.

204 RUGBY CHAPEL*

SERVANTS of God!—or sons
Shall I not call you? because
Not as servants ye knew
Your Father's innermost mind,
His, who unwillingly sees
One of His little ones lost—
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

See! In the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line.
Where are they tending?—A God
Marshalled them, gave them their goal.
Ah, but the way is so long!
Years they have been in the wild!
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,
Rising around, overawe;
Factions divide them, their host
Threatens to break, to dissolve.
—Ah, keep, keep them combined!
Else, of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive;
Sole they shall stray; in the rocks
Stagger for ever in vain,
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need
Of your fainting, dispirited race,
Ye, like angels, appear,
Radiant with ardour divine!
Beacons of hope, ye appear!
Languor is not in your heart,
Weakness is not in your word,
Weariness not on your brow.
Ye alight in our van! At your voice
Panic, despair, flee away.
Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, re-inspire the brave!
Order, courage, return.
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
Follow your steps as ye go.
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
Strengthen the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march,
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the City of God.

Matthew Arnold.

205 VICTORY IN DEFEAT *

AH, God, alas,
How soon it came to pass
The sweetness melted from Thy barbèd hook
Which I so simply took;
And I lay bleeding on the bitter land,
Afraid to stir against Thy least command,
But losing all my pleasant life-blood, whence
Force should have been heart's frailty to withstand.
Life is not life at all without delight,
Nor has it any might;
And better than the insentient heart and brain
Is sharpest pain;
And better for the moment seems it to rebel,
If the great Master, from His lifted seat,
Ne'er whispers to the wearied servant 'Well!'
Yet what returns of love did I endure,
When to be pardoned seemed almost more sweet
Than aye to have been pure!
But day still faded to disastrous night,
And thicker darkness changed to feebler light,
Until forgiveness, without stint renewed,
Was now no more with loving tears imbued,
Vowing no more offence.
Not less to Thine Unfaithful didst Thou cry,
'Come back, poor Child; be all as 'twas before.'
But I,
'No, no; I will not promise any more!
Yet, when I feel my hour is come to die,
And so I am secured of continence,
Then may I say, though haply then in vain,
"My only, only Love, O, take me back again!"'
Thereafter didst Thou smite
So hard that, for a space,
Uplifted seemed Heaven's everlasting door,
And I indeed the darling of Thy grace.
But, in some dozen changes of the moon,
A bitter mockery seemed Thy bitter boon.

The broken pinion was no longer sore.
Again, indeed, I woke
Under so dread a stroke
That all the strength it left within my heart
Was just to ache and turn, and then to turn and ache,
And some weak sign of war unceasingly to make.
And here I lie,
With no one near to mark,
Thrusting Hell's phantoms feebly in the dark,
And still at point more utterly to die.
O God, how long!
Put forth indeed Thy powerful right hand,
While time is yet,
Or never shall I see the blissful land!
Thus I: then God, in pleasant speech and strong
(Which soon I shall forget):
'The man who, though his fights be all defeats,
Still fights,
Enters at last
The heavenly Jerusalem's rejoicing streets
With glory more, and more triumphant rites
Than always-conquering Joshua's, when his blast
The frighted walls of Jericho down cast;
And, lo, the glad surprise
Of peace beyond surmise,
More than in common Saints, for ever in his eyes.'

Coventry Patmore.

206 APPROACHES*

WHEN thou turn'st away from ill,
Christ is this side of thy hill.

When thou turnest toward good,
Christ is walking in thy wood.

When thy heart says, 'Father, pardon!'
Then the Lord is in thy garden.

When stern Duty wakes to watch,
Then His hand is on the latch.

But when Hope thy song doth rouse,
Then the Lord is in the house.

When to love is all thy wit,
Christ doth at thy table sit.

When God's will is thy heart's pole,
Then Christ is thy very soul.

George MacDonald.

207 THAT HOLY THING

THEY all were looking for a king
To slay their foes and lift them high;
Thou cam'st, a little baby thing
That made a woman cry.

O Son of Man, to right my lot
Naught but Thy presence can avail;
Yet on the road Thy wheels are not,
Nor on the sea Thy sail!

My how or when Thou wilt not heed,
But come down Thine own secret stair,
That Thou mayst answer all my need—
Yea, every bygone prayer.

George MacDonald.

208 COME DOWN

STILL am I haunting
Thy door with my prayers;
Still they are panting
Up Thy steep stairs!
Wouldst Thou not rather
Come down to my heart,
And there, O my Father,
Be what Thou art?

George MacDonald.

209 EQUITY

No bird can sing in tune but that the Lord
Sits throned in equity above the heaven,
And holds the righteous balance always even;
No heart can true response to love afford
Wherein from one to eight not every chord
Is yet attunèd by the spirits seven;
For tuneful no bird sings but that the Lord
Is throned in equity above high heaven.

O heart, by wrong unfilial scathed and scored,
And from thy humble throne with mazedness driven,
Take courage: when thy wrongs thou hast forgiven,
Thy rights in love thy God will see restored:
No bird could sing in tune but that the Lord
Sits throned in equity above the heaven.

George MacDonald.

210 A PREACHER'S SOLILOQUY *

WHAT wealth to earth our God hath given,
What growing increment for Heaven!
Men, women, youth, and children small,
I thank the good God for you all!

Not always was it mine to give
Such high regard to all who live;
Time was, I know, when I could go
  Along the streets and scarcely see
The presences my God did show
  So lavishly to me.
Around my steps,—before, behind,—
  They His creative power declared;
I only heeded them, to find
  The easiest path, as on I fared.

And even the innocent little ones,
Of value high o'er stars and suns,—
Evangelists, by Heaven's decree,
Commissioned truths to teach to me
That elsewise I had never known,—
They seemed young foreigners to be,
They never seemed mine own.
How could I be so dull and blind?
How dared I slight God's humankind?

I know ye nothing care for me;—
Each to each deep mysteries,
We cannot guess what we may be
Except by what a glance can seize.
Perchance we never met before,
Meet now the first and final time,
Yet are ye mine, over and o'er,
That, haply, I may help you climb
To Jesus, up the mount divine.
O might such high success be mine!
Fain would I couch your vision dim;
Fain would I lead you up to Him!

Nay, nay, I cannot yield up one—
No little child, no youth, no man;
I cannot say, Depart from me;
I cannot say, Begone, begone,
I have no part in thee.

No part? But how? Do I not love you?
Is not this title still more strong
Than if I'd bought you all with gold?—
Love strenuous flies, a spirit above you;
Try to escape, it will outfly you,
It will embrace, ay, and defy you
To break away its gentle hold.
Because God's love is swift and strong,
Therefore ye all to me belong.

Why do I dare love all mankind?
'Tis not because each face, each form
  Is comely, for it is not so;
Nor is it that each soul is warm
  With any Godlike glow.
Yet there 's no one to whom 's not given
Some little lineament of Heaven,
Some partial symbol, at the least, in sign
Of what should be, if it is not, within,
Reminding of the death of sin
  And life of the Divine.
And so mine own each one I call;
And so I dare to love you all.

Glory to God, Who hath assigned
To me this mixture with mankind!
Glory to God, that I am born
  Into a world, whose palace-gates
So many royal ones adorn!
  Heaven's possible novitiates,
With self-subduing freedom free,
Princely ye are, each one, to me,
  Each of secret kingly blood,
Though not inheritors as yet
  Of all your own right royal things;
For it were folly to forget
  That they alone are queens and kings
    Who are the truly good.
Yet are ye angels in disguise,
  Angels who have not found your wings;
I see more in ye than ye are
  As yet, while earth so closely clings;
As through a cloud that hides the skies
  Undoubting science hails a star
Not to be seen by other eyes,
  Yet surely among things that are;
So the dense veil of your deformities
  Love gives me power away to pull.
Alas! why will ye not from sin arise,
  And be Christ's beautiful?

Henry Septimus Sutton.

211 THANKFULNESS*

My God, I thank Thee Who hast made
The earth so bright;
So full of splendour and of joy,
Beauty and light;
So many glorious things are here,
Noble and right!

I thank Thee, too, that Thou hast made
Joy to abound;
So many gentle thoughts and deeds
Circling us round,
That on the darkest spot of earth
Some love is found.

I thank Thee more that all our joy
Is touched with pain;
That shadows fall on brightest hours;
That thorns remain;
So that earth's bliss may be our guide.
And not our chain.

I thank Thee, Lord, that here our souls,
Though amply blest,
Can never find, although they seek,
A perfect rest;
Nor ever shall, until they lean
On Jesus' breast.

Adelaide Ann Procter.

212 MARY'S GIRLHOOD

This is that blessed Mary, pre-elect
God's Virgin. Gone is a great while, and she
Dwelt young in Nazareth of Galilee.
Unto God's will she brought devout respect,
Profound simplicity of intellect,
And supreme patience. From her mother's knee
Faithful and hopeful; wise in charity;
Strong in grave peace; in pity circumspect.

So held she through her girlhood; as it were
An angel-watered lily, that near God
Grows and is quiet. Till, one dawn at home
She woke in her white bed, and had no fear
At all,—yet wept till sunshine, and felt awed:
Because the fullness of the time was come.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

213 THE HOLY FAMILY*

TURN not the prophet's page, O Son! He knew
All that Thou hast to suffer, and hath writ.
Not yet Thine hour of knowledge. Infinite
The sorrows that Thy manhood's lot must rue
And dire acquaintance of Thy grief. That clue
The spirits of Thy mournful ministerings
Seek through yon scroll in silence. For these things
The angels have desired to look into.
Still before Eden waves the fiery sword,
Her Tree of Life unransomed: whose sad Tree
Of Knowledge yet to growth of Calvary
Must yield its Tempter,—Hell the earliest dead
Of Earth resign,—and yet, O Son and Lord,
The seed o' the woman bruise the serpent's head.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

214 CHRISTMASTIDE

LOVE came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and Angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
Love Incarnate, Love Divine;
Worship we our Jesus:
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

Christina Rossetti.

215 GOOD FRIDAY *

AM I a stone and not a sheep
That I can stand, O Christ, beneath Thy Cross,
To number drop by drop Thy Blood's slow loss,
And yet not weep?

Not so those women loved
Who with exceeding grief lamented Thee;
Not so fallen Peter weeping bitterly;
Not so the thief was moved;

Not so the Sun and Moon
Which hid their faces in a starless sky,
A horror of great darkness at broad noon
I, only I.

Yet give not o'er,
But seek Thy sheep, true Shepherd of the flock,
Greater than Moses, turn and look once more
And smite a rock.

Christina Rossetti.

216 NOT YOURS BUT YOU

'HE died for me: what can I offer Him?
Towards Him swells incense of perpetual prayer:
His court wear crowns and aureoles round their hair:
His ministers are subtle Cherubim;
Ring within ring, white intense Seraphim
Leap like immortal lightnings through the air.
What shall I offer Him? Defiled and bare,
My spirit broken and my brightness dim?'
'Give Me thy youth.' 'I yield it to Thy rod,
As Thou didst yield Thy prime of youth for me.'
'Give Me thy life.' 'I give it breath by breath;
As Thou didst give Thy life so give I Thee.'
'Give Me thy love.' 'So be it, my God, my God,
As Thou hast loved me, even to bitter death.'

Christina Rossetti.

217 BIRDS OF PARADISE

GOLDEN-WINGED, silver-winged,
Winged with flashing flame,
Such a flight of birds I saw,
Birds without a name:
Singing songs in their own tongue—
Song of songs—they came.

One to another calling,
Each answering each,
One to another calling
In their proper speech:
High above my head they wheeled,
Far out of reach.

On wings of flame they went and came
With a cadenced clang:
Their silver wings tinkled,
Their golden wings rang;
The wind it whistled through their wings
Where in heaven they sang.

They flashed and they darted
Awhile before mine eyes,
Mounting, mounting, mounting still
In haste to scale the skies,
Birds without a nest on earth,
Birds of Paradise.

Where the moon riseth not
Nor sun seeks the west,
There to sing their glory
Which they sing at rest,
There to sing their love-song
When they sing their best:

Not in any garden
That mortal foot hath trod,
Not in any flowering tree
That springs from earthly sod,
But in the garden where they dwell,
The Paradise of God.

Christina Rossetti.

218 'AFTERWARD HE REPENTED AND WENT'

LORD, when my heart was whole I kept it back
And grudged to give it Thee.
Now then that it is broken, must I lack
Thy kind word 'Give it Me'?
Silence would be but just, and Thou art just.
Yet since I lie here shattered in the dust,
With still an eye to lift to Thee,
A broken heart to give,
I think that Thou wilt bid me live,
And answer 'Give it Me.'

Christina Rossetti.

219 LORD, WHAT HAVE I TO OFFER?

LORD, what have I to offer? sickening fear
And a heart-breaking loss.
Are these the cross Thou givest me? then dear
I will account this cross.

If this is all I have, accept even this
Poor priceless offering,
A quaking heart with all that therein is,
O Thou my thorn-crowned King.

Accept the whole, my God, accept my heart
And its own love within:
Wilt Thou accept us and not sift apart?
—Only sift out my sin.

Christina Rossetti.

220 ME AND MY GIFT

ME and my gift: kind Lord, behold,
Be not extreme to test or sift;
Thy Love can turn to fire and gold
Me and my gift.

Myself and mine to Thee I lift:
Gather us to Thee from the cold
Dead outer world where dead things drift.

If much were mine, then manifold
Should be the offering of my thrift:
I am but poor, yet love makes bold
Me and my gift.

Christina Rossetti.

221 THE VISION OF S. JOHN*

THE wall rose solemnly in many squares
Of scarlet brick, above a moated space
Of water clear; and by unending stairs
This company was crossing to my place,
Their splendours ever reaching lower and lower,
I gazing higher and higher, for my chin
An angel lifted, and 'twas from within

His golden wings that veiled his sight that hour,
That I too looked and saw a mystery
Proceed, while mightily shone out the flower
Of the gold wings upon the violet sky,
Came in their battles all the seraphim
With giant plumes, with glory-beaming eyes,
Long bands and wrapping robes, in solemn guise.

Came Michael, and an army followed him;
His sword, two-handed, carried he before,
His vast eyes on the hilt, his shield's broad rim
Swung half of it behind him; in the score
Of his knights followed all the cherubim;
And half the stars shone in his banner wide
And in it all the winds were multiplied.

Came Gabriel, with his banner over him,
White lilies, brass-bright flowers, and leaves of green;
A lily, too, he carried seemed to burn
With golden flames which mounted pure and clean
To touch his blessed mouth, and then would turn
Themselves within the lily leaf again:
Gabriel's fair head sank even with dream-pain.

Came Raphael, and an army followed him;
His staff was in his hand as he strode on;
His gourd was slung behind; one mighty limb
Showed itself bare in passing; and upon
His track came many a knightly palmer grim:
On horses these, their horses well beseen
As those who fight on earth for Heaven's Queen.

Came Uriel, and his banner over him—
Red-pointed flames that lightened on the field
Of steadfast judgement, sapphirine, till dim
The eyesight, and the brain behind it reeled;
Behind him walked the strong, robed seraphim;
A roll and book in his two hands he bore,
At which great trembling all my entrails tore.

. . . . . .

These all went solemnly as if to war;
The seven archangels, with his army each;
They drifted in their march away, till far
In the blind sky together in one reach,
Like a great flight of birds: I watching saw
Their great pavilions set far off like palls,
Beyond the utmost circle of Heaven's walls.

Richard Watson Dixon.

222 SPECULA *

WHEN He appoints to meet thee, go thou forth—
It matters not
If south or north,
Bleak waste or sunny plot.
Nor think, if haply He thou seek'st be late,
He does thee wrong.

To stile or gate
Lean thou thy head, and long!
It may be that to spy thee He is mounting
Upon a tower,
Or in thy counting
Thou hast mista'en the hour.
But, if He come not, neither do thou go
Till Vesper chime,
Belike thou then shalt know
He hath been with thee all the time.

Thomas Edward Brown.

223 PRAESTO

EXPECTING Him, my door was open wide:
Then I looked round
If any lack of service might be found,
And saw Him at my side:
How entered, by what secret stair,
I know not, knowing only He was there.

Thomas Edward Brown.

224 'GOD IS LOVE'

AT Derby Haven in the sweet Manx land
A little girl had written on the sand
This legend: 'God is love.' But, when I said:
'What means this writing?' thus she answerèd:
'It 's father that 's at say,[1]
And I come here to pray,
And . . . God is love.' My eyes grew dim—
Blest child! in Heaven above
Your angel sees the face of Him
Whose name is love.

Thomas Edward Brown.

[1] sea.

225 MY GARDEN

A GARDEN is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot—
The veriest school
Of peace; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not—
Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

Thomas Edward Brown.

226 FROM 'S. PAUL'*

THOU with strong prayer and very much entreating
Willest be asked, and Thou shalt answer then,
Show the hid heart beneath creation beating,
Smile with kind eyes and be a Man with men.

Were it not thus, O King of my salvation,
Many would curse to Thee and I for one,
Fling Thee Thy bliss and snatch at Thy damnation,
Scorn and abhor the shining of the sun;

Ring with a reckless shivering of laughter,
Wroth at the woe which Thou hast seen so long,
Question if any recompense hereafter
Waits to atone the intolerable wrong:

Is there not wrong too bitter for atoning?
What are these desperate and hideous years?
Hast Thou not heard Thy whole creation groaning,
Sighs of the bondsmen and a woman's tears?

Yes, and to her, the beautiful and lowly,
Mary, a Maiden, separate from men,
Camest Thou nigh and didst possess her wholly,
Close to Thy saints, but Thou wast closer then.

Once and for ever didst Thou show Thy chosen,
Once and for ever magnify Thy choice;—
Scorched in Love's fire or with His freezing frozen,
Lift up your hearts, ye humble, and rejoice!

Not to the rich He came or to the ruling,
(Men full of meat, whom wholly He abhors,)
Not the fools grown insolent in fooling
Most, when the lost are dying at the doors;

Nay but to her who with a sweet thanksgiving
Took in tranquillity what God might bring,
Blessed Him and waited, and within her living
Felt the arousal of a Holy Thing.

Ay, for her infinite and endless honour
Found the Almighty in this flesh a tomb,
Pouring with power the Holy Ghost upon her,
Nothing disdainful of the Virgin's womb.

Frederic William Henry Myers.

227 REQUESTS

I ASKED for Peace—
My sins arose,
And bound me close,
I could not find release.

I asked for Truth—
My doubts came in,
And with their din
They wearied all my youth.

I asked for Love—
My lovers failed,
And griefs assailed
Around, beneath, above.

I asked for Thee—
And Thou didst come
To take me home
Within Thy Heart to be.

Digby Mackworth Dolben.

228 HE WOULD HAVE HIS LADY SING *

SING me the men ere this
Who, to the gate that is
A cloven pearl uprapt,
The big white bars between
With dying eyes have seen
The sea of jasper, lapt
About with crystal sheen;

And all the far pleasance
Where linkèd Angels dance,
With scarlet wings that fall
Magnifical, or spread
Most sweetly over-head,
In fashion musical,
Of cadenced lutes instead.

Sing me the town they saw
Withouten fleck or flaw,
Aflame, more fine than glass
Of fair Abbayes the boast,
More glad than wax of cost
Doth make at Candlemas
The Lifting of the Host:

Where many Knights and Dames,
With new and wondrous names,
One great Laudatè Psalm
Go singing down the street;—
'Tis peace upon their feet,
In hand 'tis pilgrim palm
Of Goddes Land so sweet:—

Where Mother Mary walks
In silver lily stalks,
Star-tirèd, moon bedight;
Where Cecily is seen,
With Dorothy in green,
And Magdalen all white,
The maidens of the Queen

Sing on—the Steps untrod,
The Temple that is God,
Where incense doth ascend,
Where mount the cries and tears
Of all the dolorous years,
With moan that ladies send
Of durance and sore fears:—

And Him Who sitteth there,
The Christ of purple hair,
And great eyes deep with ruth,
Who is of all things fair
That shall be, or that were,
The sum, and very truth.
Then add a little prayer,

That since all these be so,
Our Liege, Who doth us know,
Would fend from Sathanas,
And bring us, of His grace,
To that His joyous place;
So we the Doom may pass,
And see Him in the Face.

Digby Mackworth Dolben.

229 THE PASSION OF MARY

VERSES IN PASSION-TIDE

O LADY Mary, thy bright crown
Is no mere crown of majesty;
For with the reflex of His own
Resplendent thorns Christ circled thee.

The red rose of this Passion-tide
Doth take a deeper hue from thee,
In the five wounds of Jesus dyed,
And in thy bleeding thoughts, Mary!

The soldier struck a triple stroke,
That smote thy Jesus on the tree:
He broke the Hearts of Hearts, and broke
The Saint's and Mother's hearts in thee.

Thy Son went up the angels' ways,
His passion ended; but, ah me!
Thou found'st the road of further days
A longer way of Calvary;

On the hard cross of hope deferred
Thou hung'st in loving agony,
Until the mortal-dreaded word
Which chills *our* mirth, spake mirth to thee.

The angel Death from this cold tomb
Of life did roll the stone away;
And He thou barest in thy womb
Caught thee at last unto the day,
Before the living throne of whom
The Lights of Heaven burning pray.

Francis Thompson.

230 THE KINGDOM OF GOD *

O WORLD invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!

Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of thee there?

Not where the wheeling systems darken
And our benumbed conceiving soars!
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

The angels keep their ancient places;
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
Cry; and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my soul, my daughter,
Cry—clinging Heaven by the hems;
And lo, Christ walking on the water
Not of Gennesareth, but Thames!

Francis Thompson.

231 OUR LADY*

MOTHER of God! no lady thou:
Common woman of common earth!
Our Lady ladies call thee now,
But Christ was never of gentle birth;
A common man of the common earth.

For God's ways are not as our ways.
The noblest lady in the land
Would have given up half her days,
Would have cut off her right hand,
To bear the Child that was God of the land.

Never a lady did He choose,
Only a maid of low degree,
So humble she might not refuse
The carpenter of Galilee.
A daughter of the people, she.

Out she sang the song of her heart.
Never a lady had so sung.
She knew no letters, had no art;
To all mankind, in woman's tongue,
Hath Israelitish Mary sung.

And still for men to come she sings,
Nor shall her singing pass away.
He hath filled the hungry with good things—
Oh, listen, lords and ladies gay!—
And the rich He hath sent empty away.

Mary Elizabeth Coleridge.

232 WHEN MARY THRO' THE GARDEN WENT

WHEN Mary thro' the garden went,
There was no sound of any bird,
And yet, because the night was spent,
The little grasses lightly stirred,
The flowers awoke, the lilies heard.

When Mary thro' the garden went,
The dew lay still on flower and grass,
The waving palms above her sent
Their fragrance out as she did pass.
No light upon the branches was.

When Mary thro' the garden went,
Her eyes, for weeping long, were dim.
The grass beneath her footsteps bent,
The solemn lilies, white and slim,
These also stood and wept for Him.

When Mary thro' the garden went,
She sought, within the garden ground,
One for whom her heart was rent,
One Who for her sake was bound,
One Who sought, and she was found.

Mary Elizabeth Coleridge.

233 SAN LORENZO'S MOTHER

I HAD not seen my son's dear face
(He choose the cloister by God's grace)
Since it had come to full flower-time.
I hardly guessed at its perfect prime,
That folded flower of his dear face.

Mine eyes were veiled by mists of tears
When on a day in many years
One of his Order came. I thrilled,
Facing, I thought, that face fulfilled.
I doubted, for my mists of tears.

His blessing be with me for ever!
My hope and doubt were hard to sever.
That altered face, those holy weeds.
I filled his wallet and kissed his beads,
And lost his echoing feet for ever.

If to my son my alms were given
I know not, and I wait for Heaven.
He did not plead for child of mine,
But for another Child divine,
And unto Him it was surely given.

There is One alone Who cannot change;
Dreams are we, shadows, visions strange;
And all I give is given to One.
I might mistake my dearest son,
But never the Son Who cannot change.

Alice Meynell.

234 IN PORTUGAL, 1912

AND will they cast the altars down,
Scatter the chalice, crush the bread?
In field, in village, and in town
He hides an unregarded head;

Waits in the corn-lands far and near,
Bright in His sun, dark in His frost,
Sweet in the vine, ripe in the ear—
Lonely unconsecrated Host.

In ambush at the merry board
The Victim lurks unsacrificed;
The mill conceals the harvest's Lord,
The wine-press holds the unbidden Christ.

Alice Meynell.

235 THE NEWER VAINGLORY

Two men went up to pray; and one gave thanks,
Not with himself—aloud,
With proclamation, calling on the ranks
Of an attentive crowd.

'Thank God, I clap not my own humble breast,
But other ruffians' backs,
Imputing crime—such is my tolerant haste—
To any man that lacks.

'For I am tolerant, generous, keep no rules,
And the age honours me.
Thank God I am not as these rigid fools,
Even as this Pharisee.'

Alice Meynell.

236 THE SECOND CRUCIFIXION

Loud mockers in the roaring street
Say Christ is crucified again:
Twice pierced His gospel-bearing feet,
Twice broken His great heart in vain.

I hear, and to myself I smile,
For Christ talks with me all the while.

No angel now to roll the stone
From off His unawaking sleep,
In vain shall Mary watch alone,
In vain the soldiers vigil keep.

Yet while they deem my Lord is dead
My eyes are on His shining head.

Ah! never more shall Mary hear
That voice exceeding sweet and low
Within the garden calling clear:
Her Lord is gone, and she must go.

Yet all the while my Lord I meet
In every London lane and street.

Poor Lazarus shall wait in vain,
And Bartimæus still go blind;
The healing hem shall ne'er again
Be touched by suffering humankind.

Yet all the while I see them rest,
The poor and outcast, on His breast.

No more unto the stubborn heart
With gentle knocking shall He plead,
No more the mystic pity start,
For Christ twice dead is dead indeed.

So in the street I hear men say,
Yet Christ is with me all the day.

Richard Le Gallienne.

237 DE PROFUNDIS *

WOULD that with you I were imparadised,
White Angels around Christ!
That by the borders of the eternal sea
Singing, I too might be:
Where dewy green the palm-trees on the strand,
Your gentle shelter, stand:
Where reigns the Victor Victim, and His Eyes
Control eternities!
Immortally your music flows in sweet
Stream round the Wounded Feet;
And rises to the Wounded Hands; and then
Springs to the Home of Men,
The Wounded Heart: and there in flooding praise
Circles, and sings, and stays.
My broken music wanders in the night,
Faints, and finds no delight:
White Angels! take of it one piteous tone,
And mix it with your own!
Then, as He feels your chaunting flow less clear,
He will but say: *I hear*
The sorrow of My child on earth! and send
Some fair, celestial friend,

One of yourselves, to help me: and you will,
Choirs of the Holy Hill,
Help me, who walk in darkness, far away
From your enduring day:
Who have the wilderness for home, till morn
Break, and my day be born;
And on the Mount of Myrrh burn golden white
Light from the Light of Light.

Lionel Pigot Johnson.

238 A CHRISTMAS SONG

WHEN from His throne the Godhead bowed
To human Form below,
The Heavens dropt down, and every cloud
Hung loath to let Him go.
Oh, bright the light, and white the night,
When, full of favour stored,
God's Maid lay down in Bethlehem town,
To wait the coming Lord!

Before His Feet went down the snow
Amid the tranquil night,
Till all the world lay white below
To greet the Lord of Light.
Oh, bright the light, etc.

The rugged hills and all the rocks
Were covered as with fleece;
The towns were seen like folded flocks
To wait the Prince of Peace.
Oh, bright the light, etc.

Oh, like a flock in field and fold,
The wintry world lay then,
On that fair night in days of old
When Christ came down to men.
Oh, bright the light, and white the night,
When, full of favour stored,
God's Maid lay down in Bethlehem town,
To wait the coming Lord!

Laurence Housman.

239 A CHRISTMAS CAROL

THE Christ-Child lay on Mary's lap,
His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary were the world,
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-Child lay on Mary's breast,
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the Kings,
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-Child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world,
But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-Child stood at Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at Him,
And all the stars looked down.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton.

240 THE HOLY OF HOLIES

'ELDER Father, though thine eyes
Shine with hoary mysteries,
Canst thou tell what in the heart
Of a cowslip blossom lies?

'Smaller than all lives that be,
Secret as the deepest sea,
Stands a little house of seeds,
Like an elfin's granary.

'Speller of all stones and weeds,
Skilled in Nature's crafts and creeds,
Tell me what is in the heart
Of the smallest of the seeds.'

'God Almighty, and with Him
Cherubim and Seraphim,
Filling all Eternity—
Adonai Elohim.'

Gilbert Keith Chesterton.

241 IN THE WILDERNESS

CHRIST of His gentleness
Thirsting and hungering,
Walked in the wilderness;
Soft words of grace He spoke
Unto lost desert-folk
That listened wondering.
He heard the bitterns call
From ruined palace-wall,
Answered them brotherly.
He held communion
With the she-pelican
Of lonely piety.
Basilisk, cockatrice,
Flocked to His homilies,
With mail of dread device,
With monstrous barbèd stings,
With eager dragon-eyes;
Great rats on leather wings
And poor blind broken things,
Foul in their miseries.
And ever with Him went,
Of all His wanderings
Comrade, with ragged coat,
Gaunt ribs—poor innocent—
Bleeding foot, burning throat,
The guileless old scape-goat;
For forty nights and days
Followed in Jesus' ways,
Sure guard behind Him kept,
Tears like a lover wept.

Robert Graves.

242 THE BELLS OF HEAVEN

'TWOULD ring the bells of Heaven,
The wildest peal for years,
If Parson lost his senses
And people came to theirs,
And he and they together
Knelt down with angry prayers
For tamed and shabby tigers,
And dancing dogs and bears,
And wretched, blind pit ponies,
And little hunted hares.

Ralph Hodgson.

243 THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

I WOULD choose to be a doorkeeper
In the House of the Lord
Rather than lords and ladies
In satin on the sward.
To draw the bolts for the white souls
Would be my rich reward:
And I the happy doorkeeper
To the House of the Lord.

Of all troop in not one comes out
From the House of the Lord,
Those who have won from sin and death,
From age and grief abhorred.
There is more room within its courts
Than palaces afford;
So great it is and spacious
In the House of the Lord.

They come with shining faces
To the House of the Lord;
The broken hearts and weary
That life has racked and scored;

They come hurrying and singing
To sit down at His board,
They are young and they are joyful
In the House of the Lord.

There are lilies and daisies
In the House of the Lord.
The lover finds his lover
With a long, long regard.
The mothers find the children,
Strayed from their watch and ward,
O the meetings and the greetings
In the House of the Lord!

I would be a humble doorkeeper
In the House of the Lord,
Where the courts are white and shining
In the Light of the Word.
When the saved souls come trooping
For the gates to be unbarred,
O blessed is the doorkeeper
In the House of the Lord!

Katharine Tynan Hinkson.

244 I SEE HIS BLOOD UPON THE ROSE

I SEE His blood upon the rose
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,
His body gleams amid eternal snows,
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower;
The thunder and the singing of the birds
Are but His voice—and carven by His power
Rocks are His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,
His cross is every tree.

Joseph Mary Plunkett.

245 THE SEEKERS

FRIENDS and loves we have none, nor wealth nor blessed abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end of the road.

Not for us are content, and quiet, and peace of mind,
For we go seeking a city that we shall never find.

There is no solace on earth for us—for such as we—
Who search for a hidden city that we shall never see.

Only the road and the dawn, the sun, the wind, and the rain,
And the watch fire under stars, and sleep, and the road again.

We seek the City of God, and the haunt where beauty dwells,
And we find the noisy mart and the sound of burial bells.

Never the golden city, where radiant people meet,
But the dolorous town where mourners are going about the street.

We travel the dusty road till the light of the day is dim,
And sunset shows us spires away on the world's rim.

We travel from dawn to dusk, till the day is past and by,
Seeking the Holy City beyond the rim of the sky.

Friends and loves we have none, nor wealth nor blest abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end of the road.

John Masefield.

246 LAUGH AND BE MERRY

LAUGH and be merry, remember, better the world with a song,
Better the world with a blow in the teeth of a wrong.
Laugh, for the time is brief, a thread the length of a span,
Laugh and be proud to belong to the old proud pageant of man.

Laugh and be merry: remember, in olden time,
God made Heaven and Earth for joy He took in a rhyme,
Made them, and filled them full with the strong red wine of His mirth,
The splendid joy of the stars: the joy of the earth.

So we must laugh and drink from the deep blue cup of the sky
Join the jubilant song of the great stars sweeping by,
Laugh, and battle, and work, and drink of the wine outpoured
In the dear green earth, the sign of the joy of the Lord.

Laugh and be merry together, like brothers akin,
Guesting awhile in the rooms of a beautiful inn,
Glad till the dancing stops, and the lilt of the music ends.
Laugh till the game is played; and be you merry, my friends.

John Masefield.

247 THE SCRIBE

WHAT lovely things
Thy hand hath made,
The smooth-plumed bird
In its emerald shade,
The seed of the grass,
The speck of stone
Which the wayfaring ant
Stirs, and hastes on!
Though I should sit
By some tarn in Thy hills,
Using its ink
As the spirit wills
To write of Earth's wonders,
Its live willed things,
Flit would the ages
On soundless wings
Ere unto *Z*
My pen drew nigh,
Leviathan told,
And the honey-fly:
And still would remain
My wit to try—
My worn reeds broken,
The dark tarn dry,
All words forgotten—
Thou, Lord, and I.

Walter de la Mare.

NOTES

PAGE

1– 3. Nos. 1–4. Most of our knowledge of mediaeval lyrics comes from collections made in the fifteenth century. But there seems to be no doubt that a great part of the contents of these song-books was handed down from earlier times by tradition or in older MSS. now lost. I have therefore thought it advisable to begin with a representative group of these poems, though some of them, such as that exquisite flower of mediaeval lyric, 'I sing of a Maiden,' may not have attained their present form until after the time of Chaucer.

3. No. 5. From the Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*.

l. 34. A chantry was an endowment for a priest to sing mass for the soul of the founder or others as the conditions of its foundation might appoint.

5. No. 6. From the commonplace book of Richard Hill 'seruant with Mr. Wyngar, alderman of London,' whose daughter he married, in the approved style of City romance, in 1518. The poem itself is evidently much older. Other versions survived in oral tradition until quite recently, and are printed in Dr. Dearmer's *English Carol Book* with a note on the Eucharistic symbolism of the lines, the wounded knight representing the Divine Victim and the bed with its hangings the altar.

5. No. 7. Lydgate was a monk of Bury St. Edmunds. He seems to have lived to the age, remarkable for his time, of eighty; and the quantity of his verse is proportionately remarkable, extending to many thousands of lines. To judge by the small fraction which is all that I can pretend to have read, he seldom rose to the level of the extracts here given from *Lydgate's Testament*, a trifle of 100 stanzas or so. He was patronized by Henry V (at whose

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instance he wrote a *Life of Our Lady* in 847 stanzas), Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, and others of high degree.

6. No. 8. Sir Walter Scott honoured Dunbar with the title of 'a poet unequalled by any that Scotland has ever produced'; and Mr. Palgrave called his poetry 'the fine flower of expiring Mediaevalism'; tributes that are justified by such beautiful lyrics as that from which some stanzas are here given. He was born about 1460, probably in East Lothian, and was at one time a Franciscan. As a wandering friar, ready, by his own confession, 'all men to begyle' with tricks and falsehoods, he made good cheer in 'every lusty town and place' in England 'from Berwick to Kallice,' and also crossed 'the ferry' at Dover and taught the people of Picardy. After quitting the Order he became court poet to James IV, with a pension and a half-promise of 'a benefice of £40 or more yearly.' By way of preferment the value of his future benefice was afterwards fixed at '£100 a year or above,' but it remained in the clouds, and after the first decade of the sixteenth century we hear no more of him.

As Mr. Palgrave says, 'the early Scottish orthography has at first sight the appearance of an unknown tongue.' I have therefore modernized the spelling of Dunbar, Lindsay, and Hume more freely than that of their English contemporaries.

7. No. 9. Hawes, who was groom of the chamber to Henry VII, may be called the last of the English mediaeval poets; for he professed himself a disciple of Lydgate, and died just before the beginnings of our modern poetry showed themselves in the work of Surrey and Wyatt. Yet his allegorical epic *The Pastime of Pleasure*, from which this stanza is taken, is a direct ancestor of *The Faerie Queene*, a fact that suggests that these divisions into periods, though convenient, are sometimes apt to be misleading.

7. No. 10. From *The Monarchy*, 'a Dialogue of the Miserabill Estait of this World' in more than 6,000 lines. Lindsay's official position as Lyon king of

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arms and court poet to James V did not restrain him from vigorously satirizing abuses in Church and State.

8. No. 11. Hunnis was appointed a gentleman of the Chapel Royal by Edward VI, found himself in the Tower through meddling with a Protestant conspiracy against Mary, but was restored to his office by Elizabeth, and in 1566 was promoted to be Master of the children of the Chapel Royal. These homely lines are taken from *A Handfull of Honisuckles* (the pun is obvious) appended to his *Seven Sobs of a Sorrowful Soule for Sinne* (1583), a version of the penitential psalms for which Hunnis composed the music. He 'was the first in modern times to set an Amen at the end of hymns.'

9. No. 12. According to Drayton, Gascoigne was one of those who—

> In the beginning of Eliza's reign
> Accounted were great meterers,

but had they lived a little longer (Gascoigne died in 1577) would have seen their works buried before them. He is not a Wyatt, but this poem, which consists of ten stanzas in all, is a good specimen of the work of that dawn which was soon to be outshone by the blaze of the Elizabethan noon. By his marriage in 1568 he became stepfather to that lively and versatile Elizabethan minor Nicholas Breton, author of No. 13.

11. No. 14. Raleigh is a typical example of the amateur poets of an age in which the writing of verse was almost as necessary an accomplishment of a gentleman as the management of his sword or of his horse. This poem is one of a half a dozen which he is said to have written 'the night before his execution.' But from the allusions in lines 19–30 Dr. Hannah assigns it with more probability to 1603, shortly after his brutal cross-examination by the Attorney-General Coke, and his unjust condemnation for high treason, and before his reprieve. Thirty lines omitted.

l. 26. No Elizabethan could resist this pun on the coin called an angel.

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12. No. 15. The ascription of these lines to the night before his death seems to be probable. They were published with the title 'Sir Walter Raleigh's Verses, Found in his Bible in the Gate-House at Westminster.'

12. No. 16. l. 3. The Harrowing of Hell was one of the stock subjects of the miracle plays. Our Lord was represented after the Crucifixion descending to Hades and delivering thence the souls of the Old Testament worthies.

12. No. 17. This noble hymn was published in 1596. In view of the scale of this book I did not feel justified in giving all its forty-one stanzas. Those quoted are among the most beautiful.

14. No. 18. This is all that exists of the 'unperfite' eighth canto of Book VII of *The Faerie Queene*.
l. 1. 'That speech': a speech in the preceding canto, in which Mutability had claimed dominion over the whole Universe.
l. 18. Sabbaoth and Sabbath were long supposed to be the same word. In *The Merchant of Venice*, IV. i. 40 the Quarto of 1600 makes Shylock swear 'by our holy Sabaoth,' whereas the Folio of 1623 has 'Sabbath.' A note on this line in *The New Variorum Shakespeare* gives examples of the same confusion not only in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, a fact which should interest the Bacon-Shakespeare enthusiasts, but also in Johnson's *Dictionary* and in the first edition of *Ivanhoe*.

15. No. 19. From the words appended to this sonnet, *Splendidis longum valedico nugis*, we may regard it as Sidney's farewell to secular poetry.

15. No. 20. The paraphrase of the Psalms from which this is taken was the joint work of Sidney and his sister, the Countess of Pembroke. A note at the end of Ps. xliii in the MS., 'hitherto Sir Ph. Sidney,' has been taken to mean that all the later paraphrases were written by the Countess, but this seems doubtful. The work is uneven throughout; some of the paraphrases are very uncouth, but

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others possess splendid virility and force; and, as this is one of the best, I have ventured, with a cautionary ?, to attribute it to the better poet.

They were first printed in 1823. A selection was included by Ruskin, with a characteristic Preface and Commentary, in *Bibliotheca Pastorum*, vol. ii, 1877.

17. No. 21. Alexander Hume, or Hoome, minister of Logie, near Stirling, commenced poet with a very definite purpose, which is indicated in the title of his book, printed in 1599: *Hymnes or Sacred Songs, wherein the right use of Poesie may be espied.* He wages unrelenting war against 'prophane sonnets and vain ballats of love,' and 'fabulous faits' of heroes; and it was in a great measure due to him that secular poetry long remained under the ban of the Kirk. In this poem he pursues his subject rather monotonously through twenty-three stanzas. Most of those omitted are devoted to piling up Scriptural illustrations of the theme.

18. No. 22. This lively piece is from the *Reliquiae Wottonianae*, where it is described as an Imitation of Horace, Ode ix of Book III. Note that 'world' in verse 1 is a dissyllable. But this and No. 23, which is also from *Rel. Wotton.*, have been ascribed to Raleigh without authority.

19. No. 23. l. 5. For the sake of the metre some editors have inserted 'midnight' before darkness.

20. No. 24. From a Song Book published 1606.

20. No. 25. With all its glory there is a darker side to the reign of Elizabeth, and the name of Southwell brings it strongly before us. Under the policy of terrorism by which the Government vainly hoped to stamp out Roman Catholicism he was in peril of a traitor's death from the moment he returned, a priest and a Jesuit, from Douai to his native country in 1586. He was captured in 1592, thirteen times tortured, and after lying nearly three years in prison won a martyr's crown at Tyburn. He was the first English poet of any note since the

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Middle Ages to dedicate his Muse entirely to sacred uses, and his influence helped to rescue English lyric poetry from the amatory-pastoral rut into which it had fallen, and showed the way to the religious poets of the next century.
Ben Jonson told Drummond that 'so he had written that piece the Burning Babe he would have been content to destroy many of his.' It may be noted that, writing in the old-fashioned 'fourteeners,' Southwell also relies a good deal on the old-fashioned device of alliteration.

21. No. 26. Like most of Southwell's poems, this was written in prison, and it bears evident marks of its origin. The weariness and pain, the hints of fear lest he should be forced to betray his friends (which he never did) or even to apostatize, the longing for death and hankering after suicide, and the final resolution to endure to the end render it infinitely pathetic.
l. 21. *prest*, ready (French *prêt*), perhaps with a play on the torture of 'pressing.'

23–25. Nos. 28–31. 'Among the "little masters" of the Elizabethan age [Campion] has no superior,' says Mr. Bullen, who rescued him from an oblivion of nearly three centuries. He was 'a physician of some standing,' and, with Elizabethan versatility, not only wrote masques and lyrics, but himself set them to music. Those given here are from *Divine and Moral Songs* published in the same volume with his *Light Conceits of Lovers* in 1613.

25. No. 32. An *alumnus* of Winchester, New College, and the Middle Temple, Davies began his legal career inauspiciously by breaking his cudgel over the head of a fellow-barrister at dinner in Hall. *Nosce Teipsum*, from which some stanzas are here quoted, was written during the retirement that followed this exploit. Dr. Johnson's studies did not often carry him into the company of the less familiar Elizabethans, but he compressed a complete criticism of this poem into a sentence when he said that 'though merely philosophical [it] yet seldom leaves the ear ungratified.' If Davies adds nothing to the stock arguments for the immortality

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of the soul he maintains the dignity of the subject in melodious verse ; and, as for proof,

If death do quench us quite, we have great wrong.

It is difficult, apart from revelation, to get beyond that.

Reinstated in his profession he rose to be Attorney General for Ireland, and just before his death was appointed Chief Justice of the King's Bench.

27. No. 33. Barnabe, son of Richard Barnes, Bishop of Durham, is almost a caricature of an Elizabethan minor poet. He left Brasenose without a degree, went campaigning in France with Essex, engaged in literary controversy, wrote plays, extravagant love poems, and *A Divine Centurie of Spirituall Sonnets*, and died at forty.

28. No. 34. Thomas, or rather Tom Heywood (for he said, 'I hold he loves me best that calls me Tom,' and no poet is more loveable), was one of the most prolific of the prolific Elizabethans. Apart from the 220 plays in which he claims 'either an entire hand or at the least a main finger,' his principal work was *The Hierarchie of the blessed Angells*, a huge gallimaufry of heroic couplets, lyrics, and prose. It is full of out-of-the-way learning (Heywood was a Fellow of Peterhouse) and might well be called *De omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. Most of the verse reaches no very high level.

The second *Ternion*, as the Schoole relates,
Are *Dominations*, *Vertues*, *Potestates*,

is a fair specimen. The prose is easier reading, in spite of the formidable heading, 'Theologicall, Philosophicall, Poeticall, Historicall, Apothegmaticall, Hierogriphicall, and Emblematicall Observations.' Part of one of the interspersed lyrics is here quoted. After the third stanza nine more, descriptive of the progress of the search, are omitted.

30. No. 36. Mr. Saintsbury describes Donne as 'the greatest of all the great Deans of S. Paul's—an office which has had perhaps, on the whole, a more distinguished series of incumbents than any in Christendom.' 'The recreations of his youth were

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poetry,' says Walton, and, though he afterwards regretted some of his early effusions, 'he was not so fallen out with heavenly poetry as to forsake that; no, not in his declining age,' when, in fact, most of his sacred poems were written. Ben Jonson discerningly called him 'the first poet in the world for some things,' but added that 'for want of being understood he would perish.' This prophecy came near to being fulfilled in the eighteenth century, when he was regarded as the type and chief of the 'metaphysical' poets then in deep disfavour; and in the early nineteenth Macaulay, following the common cry, mentions him only for the sake of a fling at his 'grotesque conceits and tuneless numbers.' Now the wheel has turned again, and in spite of the qualities hinted at in the second of Jonson's sentences quoted above the justice of the first is generally recognized.
Of this Hymn, Walton relates that Donne 'caused it to be set to a most grave and solemn tune, and to be often sung to the organ by the Choristers of S. Paul's Church, in his own hearing; especially at the Evening Service.'

30. No. 37. Written in sickness while Donne was still a layman, this Litany is almost overloaded with passionate pleading and great thoughts with which the metre seems to struggle in vain. But if the result is sometimes rather crabbed this defect is outweighed by many fine and pregnant phrases. Its twenty-eight stanzas include a magnificent series of invocations too long for quotation.

33. No. 41. Part of this is dated by Walton March 23, 1630(-31), eight days before Donne's death.

34. No. 42. From *A Relation of a Journey begun An. Dom. 1610. Foure Bookes. Containing a description of the Turkish Empire, of Ægypt, of the Holy Land, of the Remote parts of Italy, and Islands adjoyning.* After describing the Holy Sepulchre Sandys goes on, 'It is a frozen zeal that will not be warmed with the sight thereof. And, Oh that I did retain the effects that it wrought, with an unfainting perseverance! who did then dedicate this hymn to my Redeemer.'

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34. No. 43. He was brother of Edwin Sandys who appears in Walton's *Lives* as one of Hooker's favourite pupils and instrumental, through his father, the Archbishop of York, in obtaining for his tutor the Mastership of the Temple. After his Eastern travels George Sandys went to America as Treasurer of the Virginia Company. In his later years he was a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber to Charles I, who during his captivity took pleasure in reading Sandys' 'paraphrases' of the Psalms. They were set to music by Henry Lawes, the friend of Milton and composer of the music to *Comus*: and they drew from their author's colleague, Thomas Carew, the fine poem No. 70 in this book.
As a pioneer of the heroic couplet, before Denham and Waller, the reputed parents of 'regular' English verse, Sandys was held in honour by eighteenth-century critics when his greater contemporaries were forgotten. But his version of the Psalms never became popular, though he was more successful than some who have attempted the same impossible task. He also paraphrased in verse the Book of Job, the Song of Solomon, and other parts of the Bible, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the tragedy *Christ's Passion* attributed to S. Gregory Nazianzen.
Three stanzas omitted.

35. No. 44. Phineas, elder brother of Giles Fletcher (see next Note), was an Etonian and King's College man and Rector of Hilgay, Norfolk.

36–38. Nos. 45–46. The name of Giles Fletcher, scholar of Trinity, Cambridge, and Rector of Alderton, Suffolk, should stand high on the long roll of poets who have been clergymen of the English Church. He and his brother Phineas came of a poetic stock. Their father was a minor poet, and John Fletcher the dramatist was their first cousin; but poetically the brothers are descendants of Spenser and forerunners of Milton, who was familiar with their works. *Paradise Regained* especially shows the influence of Giles Fletcher's *Christ's Victorie and Triumph*. In later times, even to the present day, hardly any poem has been more undeservedly neglected

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than this fine, if sometimes rather florid, epic of our Redemption. These extracts are taken from Cantos 1, The Incarnation, and 4, The Resurrection and Ascension. The intermediate cantos deal with the Temptation and the Passion.

39. Nos. 47–48. Drummond, laird of Hawthornden, near Edinburgh, was a man of culture and learning, whose admiration for contemporary English poets led him to write in that language in preference to his own. Ben Jonson visited him in 1618, and Drummond's report of his talk is a document of great value. It is tempting to call him a seventeenth-century Boswell. But Drummond was a gentleman and a poet, and, on the other hand, lacked the peculiar genius to transform his rough notes of a great man's talk into a work of art.

40. No. 49. I have followed Mr. Palgrave and Mr. Massingham in omitting two stanzas from this beautiful poem. It was printed in a volume of *Sermons and Devotions* published in 1659 with the statement that the author was 'now aged 73.' He had suffered for his devotion to the cause of Charles I, to whom he had been chaplain-in-ordinary.

42. No. 51. Three stanzas omitted. Wither was a graceful and charming lyrist, but when, under Puritan influence, he wrote solely for edification these qualities were somewhat stifled, and only occasionally show themselves, as in the poems here given. They are taken from *Halleluiah*, a collection of 'praisefull and Poenitentiall Hymns, Spirituall Songs, and Morall-Odes,' dated 1641. This remarkable book contains hymns not only for every occasion, as 'A Hymne whilst we are washing,' 'When we enjoy the benefit of the Fire,' 'When we ride for Pleasure,' but also for every situation in life, as 'For one whose Beautie is much praised,' 'For a Knight of the Garter,' 'For a Poore man,' 'For an Inne-keeper,' 'For a Widower, or a Widow delivered from a troublesome Yoke-fellow.' A stanza from the hymn 'For a Jayler'

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will show the sort of thing that may be expected in a book written on this plan—

Though we have got an evill-name
And cruel men reputed are,
We may not be so much to blame,
As to the vulgar we appear.

43–47. Nos. 52–57. In the style of 'Gather ye rosebuds,' or 'Whenas in silks my Julia goes,' Herrick need fear no competitor. But in a collection like this he is necessarily at a disadvantage. For, though he has some touches of the spirit of the religious poets his contemporaries, he is not really of them. He is as far from the happy ease in Sion of Herbert as from the fervour of Crashaw, the rapture of Traherne, or the sublimity of Milton. Most of his sacred pieces, or 'Noble Numbers,' as he called them, are very short, and rather gloomy when they are not merely trifling.
If in these poems, which I think are fairly representative of 'Noble Numbers' at their best, the reader finds matter to qualify the preceding note so much the better.

7–49. Nos. 58–59. Quarles, the son of a gentleman of Essex, was cupbearer to Elizabeth of Bohemia, celebrated by Wotton as 'the eclipse and glory of her kind.' His sufferings for the Royalist cause in the Civil War are said to have hastened his death. A voluminous writer, he could still be described in 1675 as 'the darling of our plebeian judgements,' which suggests that people of taste did not think much of him. In the next century his name became a byword for a 'scrub' versifier, as Pope calls him; and unlike some of his contemporaries he has never recovered his reputation. Two poems from his *Emblems, Divine and Moral*, those with the refrains 'My Best Beloved's mine,' and 'False world, thou liest,' are fairly well known. But those given here are, I think, equally good specimens of his easy yet sincere style of writing, which seldom rises above the lower levels. One stanza omitted from No. 58, and three from No. 59.

50. No. 63. Shortly before his death Herbert sent the manuscript of his poems to his 'dear brother'

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Nicholas Farrer, saying 'Tell him, he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed between God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my Master; in whose service I have now found perfect freedom.' We may catch distinct echoes of these 'conflicts' in this poem—notice the gentle self-mockery with which he chides God for not sending him promotion—and in Nos. 65 and 66.

George Herbert's beautiful life and character are enshrined in Walton's fragrant casket, and nothing more need be said of them. His poetry may be summed up in the sentence in which Coleridge, turning his critical searchlight on Herbert, pronounced him 'a true poet, but a poet *sui generis*, the merits of whose poems will never be felt without a sympathy with the mind and character of the man.' Viewed simply on his merits he would be, if the expression may pass, in the second eleven of English poets. But in the hearts of Church people his place is unique, and it is even truer of him than of most poets that selection must be a matter of personal preference. I have tried to give in small compass a selection representative of his genius as a whole, not merely of his best.

56. No. 70. 'A younger brother of a good family,' Carew was an officer in the household of Charles I, a position that was highly valued, says Clarendon, 'in that age when majesty was beheld with the reverence that it ought to be.' He adds: 'After fifty years of his life spent with less severity or exactness than it ought to have been, he died in the greatest remorse for that license, and with the greatest manifestations of Christianity that his best friends could desire.'

57. No. 71. It is remarkable that Mr. Bullen, finding the first of these stanzas in a Christ Church MS., failed to identify it as Harvey's, and included it in his *Lyrics from the Song-Books* as anonymous. Criticism of Harvey's weakly Muse is almost disarmed by the frankness of his title-page: *The Synagogue, or the Shadow of the Temple. Sacred*

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Poems and Private Ejaculations in imitation of Mr. George Herbert. One of them begins,

Alas! my Lord is going;
Oh my woe!
It will be mine undoing,
If he goe.
I'le runne and overtake him:
If he stay,
I'le cry aloud and make him
Look this way.

This, though honoured by Mr. Palgrave's choice, recalls to my mind the fable of the ass that tried to imitate the frisking of the dog. In the verses here given he seems to strike a more sincere and individual note.

58–59. Nos. 72–73. 'Much noted in his time but since not, for the art and faculty of poetry' is Anthony à Wood's dry comment on Benlowes. 'In his younger years he was esteemed a papist or at least popishly affected; but being drawn off from that opinion in his elderly years, he took occasion oftentimes to dispute against papists and their opinions.' He died at Oxford and was buried in S. Mary's, having beggared himself by his liberality to 'flatterers and pretenders to poetry,' who named him by way of anagram Benevolus. His principal work *Theophila, or Love's Sacrifice*, is a discursive mystical-metaphysical poem on the ascent of the soul to Christ. Its five thousand or so lines are made more wearisome by its 'conceited' diction and jolting metre, but it has some fine passages as these stanzas show.

60. No. 75. The first stanza is one of a number of allusions and imitations which show how the lines in *Romeo and Juliet* (Act I, sc. v),

It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear,

had hit the fancy of the age.
Habington was a Roman Catholic of whom, apart from his pure and graceful verse, little is known.

61. No. 76. Apart from its merits this Hymn is interesting as one of the few exercises in verse of

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a great master of prose. It occurs in *Religio Medici*, followed by the comment, 'This is the dormitive I take to bedward; I need no other *laudanum* than this to make me sleep; after which I close mine eyes in security, content to take my leave of the sun, and sleep unto the resurrection.'

62. No. 77. The 'conceits' and irregular metres of the so-called metaphysical poets were bound to produce a reaction in favour of simplicity and smoothness. When this reaction was in the heyday of its triumph in the next century Waller's fame as one of its pioneers naturally stood high. Now his work has for most readers shrunk to the little measure of two or three lyrics in anthologies. The extracts here given from a poem written when he was over eighty may not be without interest as really more typical of the work of a poet who was once considered 'the parent of English verse.'

64. No. 78. Washbourne was a Canon of Gloucester.

65. No. 79. Composed Christmas, 1629. In the opening stanzas of the Hymn, as Mr. Palgrave says, Milton 'treats Nature as guilty—as representing a fallen world. The heathen religions of antiquity are similarly regarded as demon-worship . . . and the tradition that the power of the pagan Gods ended at the Nativity is worked out at length. He begins with the deities of Greece and Rome, passing thence to Syria and Egypt.'
Lars and Lemures: Household Gods, Spirits of the Dead. *Flamens*: Roman priests.

72. No. 80. Probably written about 1634. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch remarks that Milton here 'translates his passion for actual organ music into poetry that really resembles it . . . observe how the flute note begins, and how, gradually, the pipes open and swell to their power.'

73. No. 82. Hale was counsel for Laud at his trial, and is said to have offered to defend the King, an offer which Charles could not accept as he would not recognize the court. Though a royalist in politics Hale was a Puritan by temperament, and continued in his profession under the Common-

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wealth, becoming a Justice of the Common Pleas, and after the Restoration Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and ultimately Chief Justice of the King's Bench. One of the long line of English judges who have been devout and practising Christians, he wrote a number of religious treatises which were published after his death. He died on Christmas Day, a festival to which, unlike some Puritans, he seems to have had a special devotion, for his scanty output of verse includes no fewer than seventeen poems on it. That given here is dated 1659. It somehow found its way into a Moravian Hymn Book of 1754, from which it was quoted as 'anonymous' by Dr. Beeching in his *Lyra Sacra*.

74. No. 83. This and the next are taken from *Devotions in the Ancient Way of Offices*, Paris, 1668; a manual compiled by John Austin, a Roman Catholic lawyer, for his English co-religionists. Editions adapted for the use of Church people were put out by Hickes the Nonjuror and others. Though 'Spirit' in the first stanza is a dissyllable, the second shows that a poet might still revert to the older monosyllabic pronunciation when it suited him.
Whatever may have been Austin's intention, this and the next are not hymns but devotional poems. I have therefore omitted the doxologies. So delightful a touch as 'and let the metaphors alone,' is eminently *not* 'suited for congregational singing.'

75–81. Nos. 85–88. Mrs. Meynell noted in her *Seventeenth Century Anthology* how the freshness which is the distinctive quality of sixteenth-century poetry changed slowly into the richness of the seventeenth, and how this richness 'grew over-sweet and overmellow . . . now and then in Crashaw's exquisite verse; the beauty grew to a too-conscious glory. . . . But readers have been too much afraid of the "conceits" of that age, and critics have been too much shocked.' Dr. Johnson expressed the opinion of his century about these conceits when he wrote, in his *Life of Cowley*, of 'that familiarity

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with religious images, and that light allusion to sacred things by which readers far short of sanctity are frequently offended; and which would not be borne in the present age, when devotion, perhaps not more fervent, is more delicate.'

Crashaw was one of the Fellows of Peterhouse who were expelled in 1643 for declining to take the Solemn League and Covenant. He became a Roman Catholic, and died at Loretto a few months after he had been admitted a sub-canon of the Church of our Lady there. In selecting from him I have omitted the 'Shepherds' and 'S. Theresa' poems in favour of others which if less widely known are not less characteristic.

No. 85. Fourteen lines omitted. This and the two following are from *Carmen Deo Nostro*, Paris, 1652.

No. 86. The full title of this ecstatic ode is, 'In the glorious Assumption of Our Blessed Lady. The Hymn.' I have selected from the different versions of it which are extant.

No. 87. The title of the poem which precedes this in *Carmen* is, 'Prayer, An Ode, which was Praefixed to a little Prayer-book given to a young Gentlewoman'; and of this, 'To the Same Party Councel Concerning Her Choise.' Nothing, I believe, is known of the pathetic story at which it plainly hints.

81–82. Nos. 89–90. The famous theologian and preacher Jeremy Taylor was consecrated Bishop of Down and Connor in 1661. Coleridge ranked him with Shakespeare, Bacon, and Milton as a master of the English language. But he was a master only in prose, and his verse is the verse of a prose writer, splendid in language, deep in feeling, but lacking the true music of poetry; lacking also the ease and smoothness which many a poetaster could have given it. If a failure it is a noble failure, and as such it seemed worth while to give two short examples of it.

82–84. Nos. 91–92. Miss E. C. Gregory's article 'Cambridge Platonists' in the *Dictionary of English Church History* may be consulted for an account

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of those seventeenth-century mystics who revived the study of the Platonic and Neo-Platonic schools, and 'sought to marry philosophy to religion.' In this group Henry More was 'the most picturesque figure . . . charming, fantastic, intellectual, and deeply religious.' He entered Christ's College from Eton in 1631, and spent nearly all the rest of his long life at Cambridge, writing voluminously in prose and verse. Ten lines omitted from No. 91, and five stanzas from No. 92.

85. No. 93. *The Saint's Everlasting Rest* has given Baxter a high place among devotional writers, but he had too much of the cross-bench mind for his times. Ordained in the English Church he afterwards joined the Presbyterians, refused the bishopric of Hereford at the Restoration, and was finally lost to the Church by the operation of the Act of Uniformity. His trial before Jeffreys in 1685 gave Macaulay material for a purple passage. The poem quoted has thirty-one stanzas in all, and was published in his *Poetical Fragments*, of which he says in a prefatory 'Epistle' (dated 'London, at the Door of Eternity'), 'He that needeth them not may let them alone.'

86. No. 95. Sherburne headed these lines with the text, 'If a man should give all the substance of his house for love, he would value it as nothing' (*Cant.* 8). He was a Roman Catholic, and Clerk of the Ordnance under Charles I, Charles II, and James II, but quitted his office and lived in poverty rather than take the oaths at the Revolution. In his sacred poems he is a minor of the school of Herbert; but the gift of treating sacred themes in a familiar style without offence was a possession of the age, and there is no need to charge him with direct imitation of any one model.

86. No. 96. Patrick Carey was a younger brother of the famous Lord Falkland, and was brought up as a Roman Catholic. Evelyn, who met him in Rome in 1644, describes him as 'a witty young priest,' but though he entered the Benedictine Order he was not ordained. As he afterwards returned to England and married in order to carry

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on the family succession, Evelyn is probably right in saying that he also 'came over to our Church.' His poems were first printed in 1771, and few as they are, less than fifty in all, fully justify us in reckoning him as one of the most charming of the Caroline 'little masters.'

To this poem Carey prefixed the text, 'The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made' (*Rom.* i. 20). Mr. Saintsbury notes, 'The last lines of the stanzas here, with their varied wording and yet similar form and gist, are really little triumphs of poetic expression.'

88. No. 97. The triolet would not usually be considered an appropriate form for sacred verse, but Carey's use of it for this purpose is very happy and characteristic.

88. No. 98. For the allusion to Loretto see note on Crashaw above. Some passages, including what Mr. Massingham justly calls the 'flattish lines genteelly demurring at Crashaw's creed,' are omitted from this poem, and from the next two concluding stanzas in which Cowley tries to force the note, in my opinion without success.

At first sight it is not easy to account for the extraordinary reputation Cowley attained in his own time. Even Milton 'is said to have declared that the three greatest English poets were Spenser, Shakespeare, and Cowley'; Clarendon takes his pre-eminence as an admitted fact, and to the rank and file of critics he is 'the greatest ornament of our nation,' '*Anglorum Pindarus*, *Flaccus*, *Maro*,' and so forth. The last phrase, which is à Wood's, suggests that the key may be found in his versatility. He pleased and impressed his contemporaries by the ease and grace which he displayed alike in the epic, the lyric, and the ode.

91–94. Nos. 100–101. A State can seldom have had two such poets in its service as when Milton, one of the greatest, and Marvell, one of the most delightful of English poets, were Secretaries under Cromwell. Marvell was re-elected Member of Parliament for Hull after the Restoration, and is said to have pro-

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tected his former colleague from Royalist vengeance. It is typical of his character and of his political position that he introduced into a panegyric on Cromwell the most famous of all compliments to Charles I, in the lines 'he nothing common did nor mean,' etc. His greatest prose work, *The Rehearsal Transpros'd*, was a satire in reply to Bishop Parker of Oxford, who had attacked the policy of toleration in religion. The *Dict. of English Church Hist.* gives an amusing accoun of the controversy.

94. No. 102. We know much less of the outward events of Vaughan's seventy-four years than of Herbert's forty. He passed the greater part of them as an obscure physician in his native district of Brecon, the ancient country of the Silures, hence 'the Silurist.' As an artist in words he is inferior to Herbert, whom he acknowledges as his master, but in poetic power and depth of thought the disciple goes beyond his master and takes his stand in the very first line of English poets. His work, which for long remained as obscure as his life had been, is now so familiar to lovers of religious poetry that I have thought it best to treat it like Herbert's, and to give what appeared to me a representative selection.
When Wordsworth wrote his great 'Immortality' ode this poem was extant in only two editions dated 1650 and 1655. It was not reprinted till 1847. It is known, however, that Wordsworth possessed a copy of the 1650 volume, and it is a fair inference that he drew from Vaughan some part of the inspiration for his ode.

99. No. 107. Vaughan adds a reference to S. John iii. 2. Two stanzas omitted.

102. No. 111. Mr. Saintsbury has given John Hall the highest praise that he is likely to receive from a discerning judge in saying that he 'does not come so ill out of' the inevitable comparison with the great religious poets of his time. 'If he never climbs to the sublimest heights he seems to me to avoid the disastrous stumbles and descents of most "divine" poets very satisfactorily. Almost

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at once, though there is some titular extravagance in "The Dithyramb" [from which these stanzas are selected] he strikes into the mystical melancholy music, fully religious in tone, of which his period had the secret and kept it, until Miss Christina Rossetti found the key once more.' Another remarkable thing is that this secret was the common property of the age. It was not confined to any religious or political party. When we read that one 'divine poet' was a Churchman, another a Roman Catholic, a third a Puritan, this a Royalist, that (like Hall) a strong Cromwellian, we cannot but think how slight after all were their differences, at least in spiritual things.

104. No. 113. From *The Pilgrim's Progress*, part ii. A bowdlerized version is to be found in some modern hymn books.

104. No. 114. Traherne was for long the lost Pleiad of the seventeenth-century constellation of sacred poets. How his manuscripts were at length discovered and their author tracked down has been told by Mr. Bertram Dobell, himself the hero of the story. Another manuscript (containing an inferior version of 'Wonder'), and further information, have since been brought to light by Mr. H. I. Bell.

The son of a Hereford shoemaker, he went to Brasenose as a commoner, 'entered into the sacred function,' to quote à Wood, and became Rector of Credenhill, near Hereford, and chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgman, Lord Keeper of the Seals. The only book he published during his life was *Roman Forgeries*, a polemical work from which Mr. Dobell gives a lively extract. But a few of his poems were printed in two posthumous volumes.

Traherne's distinguishing characteristic as a writer is, as Miss G. E. Hodgson says in her *English Mystics*, 'an unextinguishable joyousness.' 'He holds out eager hands, like a child, to the glories of the visible world, but, unlike many children, he never tires of his Toys.'

106. No. 115. From *A Serious and Patheticall Contemplation of the Mercies of God*, published by

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Dr. Hickes, the Nonjuror, in 1699, 'at the request of a friend of the Author's.' It was Mr. Dobell who first identified this 'Author' as Traherne. The poem here given had previously been reprinted by Palgrave and Brooke as anonymous. It has prefixed to it the text, 'Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.'

107–110. Nos. 116–117. There is no need to say much of the saintly Bishop Ken, Nonjuror, and author of the best known of all morning and evening hymns (first published in his *Manual of Prayers for the Use of Winchester Scholars*). He is apt to draw out his poems to a length greater than the subject will bear. I have omitted about half of No. 116, and ten stanzas from No. 117.

110–111. Nos. 118–119. Thomas Flatman, pleader, painter, and poet, has achieved a slighter fame than his fellow Wykehamists Bishop Ken and Sir Thomas Browne. Mr. Saintsbury has noted that Ken and Flatman wrote morning and evening hymns, and Browne an evening one, all more or less based on Latin hymns in use at Winchester. He is a doughty champion of Flatman, remarking that his hymns 'have rather strangely missed . . . association with hundreds and thousands of often very inferior divine poems that have found home in collections.'

111. No. 120. Mr. W. T. Brooke says that the Rev. R. Cattermole printed this from a seventeenth-century MS. on the advice of James Montgomery. Its simple, unforced note of familiarity gives a very echo to the seat where the sacred poetry of that period is throned. 'Those days were gold.'

112. No. 121. From Samuel Speed's *Prison Piety*, 1677. Mr. Brooke remarks it 'is too good to be Speed's, but I cannot trace it earlier.'

113. No. 122. Mr. Bullen, who discovered this in the Christ Church MS., thought it might be Vaughan's; but as, in the absence of clear evidence, there can be no certainty, it is best to leave it as the flower of anonymous English verse.

114. No. 123. Norris, a Wykehamist and Exeter College man, was an Oxford disciple of the Cambridge

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Platonists, and from 1691 to his death rector of George Herbert's parish of Bemerton. On the noble hymn here given, with the omission of two stanzas, a sentence from Miss Gregory's article, quoted above in the note on Henry More, may be of interest. Norris, she says, is 'singular among English mystics for the manner in which he espouses the Dionysian teaching of the "Divine Dark."'

116. No. 125. From *Spiritual Songs or Songs of Praise*, first published in 1692. Three stanzas omitted. Mason is rather a forerunner of the hymn-writers of the next century than a follower of the religious poets of his own; and he is too fond of counting his blessings in such lines as—

> I might have been a pagan bred
> Or else a veiled *Jew*,
> Or cheated with an Alcoran
> Among the *Turkish* crew.

In his later years he ran into strange capers, preaching not only the immediate return of Christ, but that He would appear at Water Stratford, of which place Mason was rector, and from there reign over the earth.

117–118. Nos. 126–128. Shepherd was Congregationalist minister of Braintree. Some stanzas are omitted from these poems from his *Poenitentiall Cries*, which was appended to Mason's *Spiritual Songs*. The conjunction is noteworthy. Mason is in spirit a poet of the eighteenth century; with Shepherd we take leave of the seventeenth. As he was born in 1665, his poems must have been written shortly before their publication in 1692; and in them we find for the last time the special note of the sacred poetry of the Caroline age in such touches as—

> Attended with the Heavenly guards
> Upon the King's highway,
>
> or— Saints that have had no table-cloth
> Had Christ at dinner there.

Henceforth this note is rarely heard for nearly two hundred years.

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119. No. 129. Originally published in a Saturday *Spectator* (No. 465; August 23, 1712) on the means by which faith may be confirmed. 'The Supreme Being,' says Addison, 'has made the best arguments for His own existence in the formation of the Heavens and the Earth. . . . The psalmist has very beautiful strokes of poetry to this purpose in that exalted strain: "The heavens declare the glory of God." . . . As such a bold and sublime manner of thinking furnishes very noble matter for an ode, the reader may see it wrought into the following one.'

119–123. Nos. 130–132. Though now remembered chiefly if not solely by virtue of the dogs that delight and the little, busy bee, Dr. Watts was a considerable theologian and a poet by no means contemptible, as well as a faithful minister of Christ. The poems here given are a striking experiment in classical metre, a specimen of his devotional verse and one of his *Divine Songs for Children*. From each of the last two some stanzas are omitted.

Though Dr. Johnson was a strong, not to say a prejudiced, Churchman, he was great-hearted enough to allow his admiration of the character and talents of an Independent minister to override all other differences; and he not only persuaded the booksellers to include Watts in the edition of the poets for which he wrote the 'Lives,' but prefaced his poems with a eulogy which does honour to both men.

124. No. 134. 'Christians, awake,' and an altered version of the hymn here given, are all that remain for most people of the religious verse of John Byrom, High Churchman, Jacobite, and disciple of William Law. Much of it is written with ease and vigour, but scarcely attains to the level of poetry. I have added the less familiar 'Answer' to the 'Desponding Soul's Wish,' and one of his 'Epigrams.'

126. No. 137. The author of this vignette of an eighteenth-century 'poor parson' was the eldest of the nineteen children of the Rector of Epworth, and became Second Master of Westminster School.

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As early as 1739 he foresaw the outcome of the Movement led by his brothers, and wrote, with the same shrewd humour that appears in these lines, 'As I told Jack, I am not afraid the Church should excommunicate him (discipline is at too low an ebb), but that he should excommunicate the Church.'

126. No. 138. Taken as a whole—a whole of 107 stanzas—this cannot be called a great poem, but there is a touch of humorous originality about some of those selected which made them seem worth preserving.
Skelton was an Ulster clergyman who wrote in defence of orthodox Christianity against the fashionable cult of Deism, at the same time ministering devotedly to a poor and ignorant flock. During a famine he sold his library for their relief—no mean self-denial for a scholar—and twenty years later sacrificed for the same purpose the books he had acquired in the interval.

128–131. Nos. 139–141. Charles Wesley might have been a great poet had he not dissipated his talents in writing six or seven thousand hymns, and so attained instead the fame, which he would certainly have preferred, of being the greatest of English hymn-writers.

132. No. 142. Few things in literature are more amazing than that a happy-go-lucky Grub Street hack, who, according to Johnson, had to be carried home from the tavern every night, should, when his mind had given way, have written this

> Song, where flute-breath silvers trumpet-clang,
> And stations you for once on either hand
> With Milton and with Keats,

as Browning says in his 'Parleying' with Smart. But as it consists of eighty-six stanzas it is permissible to doubt the picturesque legend that he scribbled it with charcoal or scratched it with a key on the walls of his cell in Bedlam. Apart from the question of space no apology is needed for omitting a great part of it here. For, though its sublimity of conception and language are well

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maintained, some of its stanzas reveal the mind of a writer who was only partially sane. Although it had been more than once printed it was so little known until recent years that in 1878 Mr. C. J. Abbey believed that only a few of its stanzas were extant (*The English Church in the Eighteenth Century*, ii, 303).

136. No. 143. In his early years Newton had led a life of hardship and, by his own account, of profligacy, in the African slave trade; a circumstance which furnished Henley and Stevenson with the germ of their play *Admiral Guinea*. At the age of forty he became curate, under a non-resident vicar, of Olney, where he made the acquaintance of Cowper, and the two collaborated in the *Olney Hymns*, from which this and the next three pieces are taken.

137–139. Nos. 144–146. Of Cowper's hymns Mr. Saintsbury has said 'there is astonishing quality in them.' Some of them are indeed his best-known work, now that many readers are, to their own loss, less familiar than they should be with his lyrics, and still less with what Charles Lamb called the 'divine chit-chat' of his longer poems, a phrase that is even more applicable to his letters. It is one of the tragedies of literary history that the sweetness and humour which these letters reveal should have succumbed at last to his tendency to melancholy-madness, a tragedy for which Newton's gloomy Calvinism is at least in part responsible.

139. No. 147. One stanza omitted. Logan was a minister of the Kirk of Scotland. It has been alleged that some of the poems he published as his own were in fact written by Michael Bruce, a fellow student of Logan's at Edinburgh University, who died young. Mr. Palgrave, in his *Treasury of Sacred Song*, credited Bruce with them, but the better opinion now appears to be that they are Logan's. Chalmers, who included them as his in the 1810 edition of the *English Poets*, acutely remarked that 'he strives to throw an air of modern elegance over the simple language of the East, con-

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secrated by use and devotional spirit'; a sentence that might stand as epitaph for much of the sacred verse of the eighteenth century.

140–143. Nos. 148–151. As Mr. Sampson says in his edition of Blake's *Poetical Works*, our ignorance of Blake's outward life is comfortably veiled from us in several biographies. His 'real life was a mental and spiritual one,' and the record of this, so far as we need to know it, may be found in his writings. Nos. 148 and 149 are from 'Songs of Innocence,' and illustrate his conception of true religion, which in No. 150 is symbolized by Jerusalem, the Satanic mills standing for what he called 'natural religion.' This much quoted lyric is from the mystical writings known as his 'Prophetical Books.' 'The Grey Monk,' though less familiar, is no less characteristic of Blake, and its warning is not less needed now than when it was written.

As a poet Blake is *sui generis*. He is of no age and of every age. His poems may seem a strange product of the eighteenth century, but they would not appear less remarkable if they had been written in any other period.

143–144. Nos. 152–153. If objection be taken to so meagre a selection from so great and truly religious a poet as Wordsworth I would urge that the religious element is too deeply imbedded in his work as a whole to be easily separated from it. It could not be adequately shown except by quoting passages too long for this book. I have therefore confined myself to two of his *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*. Line 9 of No. 152 refers to the destruction of Our Lady's statues in the Great Pillage.

144. No. 154. James Montgomery was son of a Moravian minister in Ayrshire. He became editor of a Sheffield newspaper (in which capacity he was twice imprisoned for printing what in time of war were considered libels on the authorities) and chairman of a Gas Company. His full and fluent stream of belated eighteenth-century verse meanders, to adopt the phrase of his namesake, Macaulay's hapless victim, level with a very small fount

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of inspiration. But it reveals a thoroughly devout and benevolent mind.

These lines are taken from *The World before the Flood*, a mild epic on the (imaginary) doings of the early patriarchs.

146. No. 157. Joseph Blanco, who afterwards took the name of White, is, like Mrs. Barbauld and Charles Wolfe, a single-poem poet. This sonnet was reckoned by no less a critic than Coleridge 'the finest and most greatly conceived in our language,' which is the more remarkable as that language was to its author an acquired tongue. A Spaniard by birth he was at various times a priest at Seville, a member of the English Church at Oxford (where he explained the use of the breviary to Newman and Froude), an unbeliever, and a Unitarian; and through all his vicissitudes a sincere and amiable man.

146. No. 158. Grant was a Fellow of Magdalene, a Member of Parliament, where he distinguished himself by his persistent advocacy of Jewish Emancipation, and finally Governor of Bombay.

147. No. 159. These lines, which form part of a longer poem, are much superior to the usual output of the 'Corn Law Rhymer.' Elliott was a Sheffield iron merchant, and for a time a Chartist; but the passion of his life was the repeal of the Corn Laws, which he lived to see. He had also a firm belief, which has not been completely justified, in the efficacy of the Press as the universal cure of social and economic evils.

148–149. Nos. 160–161. An accomplished scholar as well as a man of much personal charm, Heber was one of those minor poets who might have been something more than minor if they had devoted themselves entirely to poetry. But he was called to other paths, and in 1823 became Bishop of Calcutta, dying in India in 1826. He wrote some of our most familiar hymns, including 'The Son of God goes forth to war,' 'From Greenland's icy mountains,' and 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.' In 1820 he tried to induce some of the bishops to

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authorize a collection of them, arguing, but in vain, that since hymns were being used in church their use should be regulated by authority.

150. No. 163. Conder was a bookseller, author, and editor of various works, including *The Congregationalist Hymn Book*, to which he contributed fifty-six hymns. His volume of poems, *The Star in the East*, published in 1824, was the occasion of Keble's Essay on Sacred Poetry in the *Quarterly Review*, and this was one of the lyrics which the reviewer selected for special praise.

150. No. 164. Milman's title to lasting fame rests rather on his work as a historian than as a poet; but his plays are reasonably good specimens of the never very satisfactory form of 'literary' drama, and the incidental lyrics which he introduced into them contain some of his best verse. This ode occurs in *The Martyr of Antioch*. One stanza is omitted. Milman was Dean of S. Paul's from 1849 to his death.

152–157. Nos. 165–169. Coleridge's verdict on Herbert (quoted p. 230 above) may be applied with equal force to Keble. Sympathy with the Tractarian as with the Caroline Churchman is necessary to the full appreciation of the poet. There are, indeed, obvious differences. Keble, for instance, has nothing of Herbert's divine playfulness. The eighteenth century had intervened, and he was of course influenced by it, though, unlike some of his contemporaries, he did not keep on fiddling on its frayed-out strings.

Thus of the two poems from *The Christian Year* the form of No. 168 (for the Tuesday before Easter) recalls Collins' great *Ode to Evening*, and No. 167 (Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity) Gray's *Elegy*. No. 165 from *Lyra Apostolica*, where it is headed 'To a thrush singing in the middle of a village, January, 1833,' shows him a disciple of Wordsworth. But while he could profit by the work of others, he shows himself no imitator but a true poet and an original one, by the use he makes of his borrowings, infusing into them his own thought

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and poetic talent, and making them his own as only a true poet can.
The Christian Year (1827) struck a new note in religious poetry, and not only won for its author a high place among religious poets, but with its universal appeal did more than anything else to bring the Romantic Revival into the religious life of England.

153. No. 166. One of Keble's contributions to *Lyra Apostolica*, the joint work of six of the Oxford leaders. It has something of the defiant, challenging note which distinguished the volume, and made it, as the war-cry of a party, less widely influential than *The Christian Year*.

157. No. 170. Lyte was Vicar of Lower Brixham, Devon, and author of a number of hymns, including such popular favourites as 'Abide with me' and 'Pleasant are Thy courts above.' In 1847 he published the first modern edition of Vaughan.

158. No. 171. Mrs. Hemans is one of those writers whose excessive popularity has injured their reputation among those who think themselves more discriminating. But, although her output was much larger than her slender talent could bear, the poetry that was in her comes out now and then.

159. No. 172. Mary Anne Roscoe, who became Mrs. Jevons and mother of the well-known writer on economics, was one of a large family who produced among them a considerable quantity of minor verse, some of which was published as *Poems for Youth by a Family Circle*. She edited *The Sacred Offering, A Poetical Annual*, also written mainly by the Roscoes.

160. No. 173. I suppose no one in modern times has evoked such memorable and diverse literary tributes as Arnold received in his son's *Rugby Chapel* (see No. 204 below), Dean Stanley's *Life of Dr. Arnold*, and Hughes' *Tom Brown's School-days*. And the poem from which these lines are taken may be added as a fourth.

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161. No. 175. It is pathetic to find these lines dated April 2, 1833, and to reflect by what still more unforeseen and unquiet paths their writer, then aged thirty-one, was to be led.

162. No. 178. Dr. Beeching notes that Newman here makes use of the belief that the 'Paradise' of the New Testament was the Garden of Eden.
Newman's career as a poet falls into two divisions, separated by an interval of thirty years. In the early days of the Tractarian fight his hopes and ideals found expression in more than a hundred short poems which were included in *Lyra Apostolica*, and formed more than half the whole book. Of the four here given Nos. 176 and 177 are most characteristic of this period. They breathe the very spirit of early Tractarianism, stern, unshrinking, uncompromising alike towards self and towards others.
In his later Anglican and earlier Roman days he wrote no poetry, with a few unimportant exceptions, until in 1866 he published the magnificent *Dream of Gerontius*, which stands in the same relation to his later as the *Lyra Apostolica* poems to his earlier thought.

163. No. 179. As a poet Williams is scholarly and correct, but suffers from being, in Mr. Saintsbury's phrase, 'a moon' of Keble. These stanzas and No. 180 are taken from his *Cathedral*.
The best modern authority for his life and character, as for those of the other Tractarians, is Canon Ollard's *Short History of the Oxford Movement*.

167. No. 182. Of Frederick, eldest of the Tennyson brothers, Browning said that as a poet he seemed to have all the qualities of his brother Alfred, but in solution. One was always expecting them to crystallize, but they never did. Two stanzas omitted.

168. No. 183. Dr. Trench was successively Dean of Westminster and Archbishop of Dublin. His *Household Book of English Poetry* bears witness to his taste and culture, and his own verse contains a larger infusion of true poetic talent than that of

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some 'scholar poets.' Mr. Saintsbury has even described these lines as 'not unworthy of Vaughan.'

173. No. 191. My difficulty with Browning has been that which Matthew Arnold confessed when asked to make a selection of the best of his own poems—that he wanted to select them all. So large a proportion of Browning's work is saturated with religious thought that, Milton apart, I would claim for him the title of the greatest of English religious poets. But his output was so large and so various that to give anything like a completely representative selection in the space allowed seemed impossible. Therefore, *Saul* being excluded for the reason explained in the Preface, I have been content with the vision of the Midnight Mass in S. Peter's from *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*, part of the character of Pompilia from the Pope's speech in *The Ring and the Book*, and one other poem.

l. 10. Architrave: the lowest member of the entablature, which in large classical churches is often so wide that with the addition of a protecting rail it serves as a gallery.

176. No. 194. Faber, a Fellow of University, was one of the group who in Newman's words 'cut into the original [Oxford] Movement at an angle,' and sought to give a Romeward twist to its original line of thought. He became a Roman Catholic in 1845, and died Superior of the Brompton Oratory. In his youth Wordsworth discerned in him high poetic promise, which however was not fulfilled. Much of his verse is marred by lapses into sheer prose, and still more by his tendency to be as the Dean of Winchester says, 'sugary and sentimental.' He wrote few poems as powerful as that from which these haunting lines are taken.

178. No. 195. Sound learning was one of the foundations of the Catholic Revival, and as historian, theologian, and linguist Dr. Neale was one of the most learned men of his time. He also shared to the full in the persecution by mobs and by those in authority which was the lot of many of the leaders of the Revival. His translations of Greek and

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Latin hymns have never been equalled, and have somewhat obscured his original poems, one of which, from his 'Hymns for the Sick' is here given. Three stanzas omitted.

179. No. 196. Lynch was an Independent minister. His poems when first published gave rise to much controversy on account of their alleged pantheism.

182. No. 200. A song from *The Saint's Tragedy*.

182. No. 201. Lines dated 'On the Torridge, Devonshire, September 10, 1849.'
Kingsley had at least two of the essential qualities of a poet, intense feeling and the gift of musical utterance. But he threw the chief of his energies into other tasks, and remains one of the might-have-beens of English poetry.

184. No. 203. l. 3. The Montanists, so called from their founder Montanus, a Phrygian of the second century.

184. No. 204. From the noble elegy in which Arnold celebrates his father. Its theme is that while the mass of mankind have much ado to save themselves (compare the sonnet 'Immortality' just above) his father was one of the few who, not content to be saved alone, are a strength and inspiration to all about them.

186. No. 205. Mrs. Meynell, a critic whose verdicts are always to be received with respect, wrote in 1896, 'Mr. Coventry Patmore's voice is single in his day, and single in our literature. It makes no part of a choir loud by numbers, and so it needs an attentive ear. To the attentive ear it sounds alone, as the divinest voice of our time.'

187–189. Nos. 206–209. Dr. MacDonald retired early from the Congregationalist ministry because his hearers objected to the lack of definite doctrine in his sermons. Under the influence of F. D. Maurice he became a lay member of the Church of England, but continued to preach occasionally in Nonconformist pulpits. Like Frederick Tennyson, he has the qualities of a great poet in solution, but

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seldom concentrates them for long together. I hope his tales of sprites and goblins still give as much pleasure to children as they formerly did to me.

189. No. 210. Mr. Sutton combined the profession of a journalist in Manchester with the writing of religious and mystical poetry, which, though never widely popular, won the admiration of such keen critics as George MacDonald, Christina Rossetti, and F. T. Palgrave.
Spiritually and poetically he is akin to the Carolines and yet entirely original. This poem, for instance, has about it suggestions of Traherne, a predecessor of whom its author could not even have heard the name when he published it in 1886.

192. No. 211. Adelaide Procter may in one respect be regarded as a model for magazine contributors. Fearing that his friendship with her father might influence his judgement she sent her verses to Dickens as editor of *Household Words* under a feigned name in order that they might be considered solely on their merits. It was not until she was established as a regular contributor that the editor discovered her identity. She became a Roman Catholic at the age of twenty-six and died at thirty-eight. Though her talent was of commoner mould than that of Christina Rossetti or Mrs. Meynell, her verse shows something of the same keen spiritual feeling as theirs. Two stanzas are omitted from this poem.

192–193. Nos. 212, 213. The first of these sonnets was written for a picture of Rossetti's own; the second for one by Michelangelo in which 'the Virgin Mother is seen withholding from the Child Saviour the prophetic writings in which His sufferings are foretold. Angelic figures beside them examine a scroll.'

194. No. 215. This is one of the poems by Christina Rossetti in which Swinburne found 'something more than the finest quality of George Herbert.' The passage in his essay on 'Wordsworth and Byron' in which these words occur is a generous

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and finely discriminating tribute to 'the Roman Catholic prelate and the Anglican poetess,' i.e. Newman and Miss Rossetti, two writers with whose points of view he had little sympathy.

197. No. 221. As an undergraduate at Oxford Dixon was a friend of Burne-Jones and William Morris, and a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. But his path soon diverged widely from theirs, and led him to take Holy Orders and to become one of the most eminent Church historians of the last century. As a poet he shows fine imaginative feeling, but often seems unable to clothe it in clear or appropriate words. These stanzas are from 'S. John' in the set of poems entitled *Christ's Company*.

198–200. Nos. 222–225. T. E. Brown, Manxman and Clifton master, once humorously explained his exclusion from a collection of 'minor poets' on the ground that perhaps he was 'among the major.' The inference is doubtful, but that he was a poet there can be no doubt; a good many pieces in his varied and perhaps too large output will appeal, as Mr. Saintsbury says, 'to those fortunate ones to whom all poetry that is poetry is welcome.'

200. No. 226. *S. Paul*, from which these stanzas are taken, was written when Myers, a young scholar steeped in the classics, had just found the faith in Christianity which he was soon to lose again. Written, as Mr. Gosse says, 'in the double fervour of Greece and of the Gospel,' it gave promise of future poetic achievement which was not fulfilled.

202. No. 228. In the Memoir prefixed to Dolben's Poems Dr. Bridges gives a sketch, full of charm and humour, of a 'Puseyite' Eton boy in the 'sixties; one of a group among whom 'Vincent Stuckey Coles' was 'the recognized authority' and leader. Dolben's poems are naturally immature (he was drowned while bathing in his twentieth year), but they reveal a very remarkable spiritual power. Of this poem, which he considers a 'masterpiece,' Dr. Bridges writes, 'The flush of its sincerity carries the fanciful mediaevalism without a trace

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of affectation; and in that respect it seems to me superior to its model,' Rossetti's 'Blessed Damozel.'

204. No. 230. Found among Thompson's papers after his death. His editor notes that 'the prevision of "Heaven in Earth and God in Man" pervading his earlier published verse, is here accented by poignantly local and personal allusion. For in these triumphing stanzas he held in retrospect those days and nights of human dereliction he spent beside London's River, and in the shadow—but all radiance to him—of Charing Cross.'

205–206. Nos. 231, 232. Miss Coleridge refused to allow her poems to be printed under her own name in her life-time, mainly, it seems, for fear of tarnishing a name illustrious in English poetry—her grandfather was S. T. C.'s nephew. It was a needless fear, for, as Dr. Bridges says, her own poems 'often exhibit imagination of a very rare kind, conveyed by the identical expression of true feeling and artistic insight.'

209. No. 237. Among the younger poets of the end of the last century, the pre-Georgians as we may now call them, Lionel Johnson takes a high place for beauty of thought and language. He was a man of passionate loyalties, devoted to scholarship and letters, to his religion (he was received into the Roman Catholic Church in 1891), to the cause of Ireland, and most of all to the school that claims him among her sons—

> 'To the fairest!
> Then to thee
> Consecrate and bounden be,
> Winchester! this verse of mine.'

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